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SEPTEMBER 1911

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"ME—SMITH"

BY

CAROLINE LOCKHART



Now here's a rogue of parts and pith!

No sheriff's troop, no faro dealer
Could frighten Pronoun dashmark Smith,
The bold Montana cattle-stealer.

His roll of crime was long and black
From boyhood trained to evil courses,
He shot tame Injuns in the back
And changed the brands of cows and horses.

He wooed a wealthy widowed squaw—
By nature being most impartial—
But lost his heart when first he saw
The Eastern schoolmarm, Dora Marshall.

(These Eastern schoolmarms, from the days
When Bret Harte wrote of "Fortyniners,"
Have been the sentimental craze
Among all cattlemen and miners.)

Deluded Dora tried to teach
"Me-Smith" the rules of moods and tenses;
Reforming thus his parts of speech,
She hoped to mend his moral fences.

But Smith mistook her friendly zeal
For something even less unpleasant,
And stole a drove of beef and veal
To buy himself a wedding present.

Young Ralston, Dora's proper flame,
Pursued and took the thief in keeping;
But soft by night the Injuns came;
They seized the wretch when all were sleeping.

His arms and legs they bound with rope
And bore him off by equitation—
For he had slain White Antelope
Without the faintest provocation.

On limestone crags at dawning's break
They chose the death that seemed to fit him;
They fed him to a rattlesnake—
That died of poison when it bit him.

—By Arthur Guiterman. (Reprinted from "Life.")

AT ALL BOOK STORES

\$1.20 net. Postpaid \$1.32.

Publishers **J. B. Lippincott Company** Philadelphia

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HIS HAND AND SEAL

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CHAPTER I.

ISABEL CURWOOD

"I DO think suitors are the worst nuisance ever!" declared Grace Curwood, tossing one letter on the floor as she opened another. "T is love, 't is love, 't is love that makes the world go round," chanted Isabel. "Who's your troublesome adorer?"

"Oh, my adorers are n't troublesome. It's the one who won't adore who troubles me."

"Oho! the Russian Count. Won't he bow at your pretty feet?"

"No, he bows at yours, and you know it. Oh, Isabel, do let me have him!"

"Have him? Indeed you may. I don't want him. I'll trade him for your new spangled scarf."

"But he won't be traded. He worships the ground you walk on."

Isabel, in front of her toilet mirror, was tilting a new hat to the exact angle of reflection, and she pulled out a long hat-pin and pushed it in again, without speaking.

"I can't see why you dislike him so," went on Grace, continuing to skim through her letters. "Oh, I say, here's an invitation for the Fords' week-end. He's sure to be there. There's the telephone! Of course it's more of those bothering suitors. Let me answer it, Isabel; it may be the Count. Good morning. . . . Yes, yes. . . . Oh, it's you, Ed? . . . Yes, Isabel is here. Hold the wire. . . . It's Ed Stuart," she said, handing the receiver to her sister. "Such a come-down, after I hoped it was the Count!"

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"Worth a hundred counts," said Isabel gayly, as she came over to the telephone.

The Ponsonby, where the Curwood girls and their mother lived, was one of New York's newest apartment houses. It was therefore over-ornate as to architecture and decoration, but it was comfortable and luxurious, and so proved satisfactory to the pleasure-seeking class that tenanted it.

Though the Curwoods were out of town at such seasons as fashion decreed, just now, in mid-December, they were at home, for matters of importance required their presence in the city. And, too, Mrs. Curwood, a matron of fashionable inclinations, was partial to New York's winter gayeties.

Mrs. Curwood's philosophy, so far as she had any, was an unbounded willingness to let everybody have his or her own way, and as a result she and her two daughters did exactly as they chose in every respect. But though individual and self-reliant, the Curwood girls were not unconventional, and as they were both pretty and charming, they were acknowledged social favorites.

Isabel, perhaps because she was the elder, was inclined to be dictatorial, and Grace, who adored her sister, amiably submitted to her dictates. Indeed, the Russian Count who had recently invaded their social set was the cause of Grace's first disagreement with her sister's opinion.

"Why don't you like him, Isabel?" she resumed, as her sister turned away from the telephone, and returned to her absorbing occupation of discovering the exact frontage of the plumed hat.

"Of course I don't dislike him," she said. "You can't dislike anybody that you never liked, to begin with."

"Don't say clever things; it does n't suit you—especially in that frivolous hat. If he saw you in that, he'd propose at once."

"Oh, I don't know," said Isabel carelessly, turning well round in her chair, as she moved a large hand mirror to and fro before her eyes to get the reflected view of the back of her hat. "Sometimes, Grace, I think it's you the Count admires, and not me."

"Oh, Isabel, do you really? I wish I thought so! But you're so much handsomer and more attractive than I am."

"There, there, Gracie; don't angle for compliments from me. You get enough from the men."

"Yes, I do; but not from him. Oh, Isabel, is n't he grand!"

"He does n't interest me at all. I've no use for a Russian count. And I'm not sure he is a count, though there's no doubt he's a Russian."

"Of course he's a count, Isabel," said Mrs. Curwood, coming into the room. "That is, if you're speaking of Kovroff, as I suppose you

are. How absurd of you to say such things! No one doubts Count Kovroff's title or wealth or charm."

"All right, Mother," said Isabel gayly. "I grant him all those attractions you mention, and as many more as you like; but all the same, he does n't appeal to me."

"No," returned Mrs. Curwood, with a reproving glance at her elder daughter; "you care only for Ed Stuart, a nonentity and a ne'er-do-well. I hate to see you throw yourself away on young Stuart. You know as well as I do that he has no money."

"But I have enough for both, Mother, so why consider that question?"

"But your fortune won't last long, once Ed Stuart gets hold of it. You know his proclivities."

"I know what you mean, Mother, but it's merely rumor, and you have no right even to mention it."

"I have n't mentioned it," returned Mrs. Curwood, noting Isabel's indignant expression.

"Pooh, it's an open secret," declared Grace. "I'll mention it, myself. Ed Stuart gambles, and everybody knows it. Why, all he wants is your money."

"Well, he can have it," returned Isabel good-naturedly; "but first I must get it myself. Mother, Guardy Weatherby says he has settled my affairs, and is going to pay me my money."

"Oh, I suppose that's all right, child, but why are n't you content to let it go on as it is, until you're married?"

"Not I. I'm an independent young woman, and I'm twenty-one years of age, so Mr. Weatherby's guardianship is legally at an end, and I am glad of it."

"Perfectly ridiculous for your Uncle Albert to leave your fortune in Mr. Weatherby's care, any way," said her mother. "He should have made me your guardian, and not to do so was rude and discourteous."

"Oh, he did n't mean it that way, Mother; but Mr. Weatherby, as a business man, is much more capable of taking care of my money and looking after it for me. Why, he told me some years ago that he had invested it so well that he had nearly doubled it. You could n't have done that."

"No, I could n't. You'll be a rich girl, Isabel, and that's why I hate to see——"

"Oh, I know what you hate to see, Mother; you need n't tell me. You'll hate to see me walk up the church aisle with Mr. Weatherby, and back again with Mr. Edwin Stuart. But you're going to see it, all the same, so you may as well make the best of it."

"Mr. Weatherby does n't approve of it any more than I do," said

Mrs. Curwood, though knowing that the guardian's opinion would have little weight with her wilful daughter.

"I know it, Mother, but that only proves Guardy's poor taste and judgment. He does n't know Ed very well, and does n't appreciate him. Oh, well, what's the use of being a free and independent American citizen, if you can't marry whom you like? I'll guarantee that after we are married, and Ed is one of the family, you and Grace will love him as a son and a brother; just as I am also positive you never could make a satisfactory son and brother of any Russian impostor."

"Count Kovroff is no impostor," said Grace quietly, "and you know it, Isabel. For some reason, you're prejudiced against him, and I know the reason, too. It's because he knows something about Ed Stuart that you wish he did n't know."

"Grace, you're horrid!" exclaimed Isabel, turning an angry face toward her sister. "I forbid you to say anything more against the man I'm going to marry; and as to that old fake Count, I believe you're in love with him, yourself."

"I am not!" declared Grace, though the color rising to her cheeks contradicted her words.

"You are so! Your blushes prove it. You're as red as red!"

"There, there, girls, don't quarrel," said Mrs. Curwood languidly; "it's such bad form, and it is n't a bit becoming."

"And it does n't do a bit of good," supplemented Isabel, as, having adjusted her hat to her satisfaction, she picked up her street coat. "Hold this coat for me, won't you, Gracie? And don't quarrel any more; and when Guardy gives me my own check-book, I'll buy you the prettiest necklace you can pick out at Tiffany's."

"Where are you going now, Isabel? I thought you were going out to luncheon with Ed."

"I am; why?"

"I don't think this coat is dressy enough. Why don't you put on something better?"

"Oh, this is all right; a plain black tailor-made is always correct. And I'm going to wear my gray feather boa—it's so becoming."

"That old thing? It is becoming, but you've worn it so much I'm tired of it."

"I like it. And I'm going to get a lot of new things soon, so I'll only wear it a few times more. What are you doing this afternoon, Mother?"

"I'm going to a Bridge, and afterward to Mrs. Malcolm's tea. Grace will meet me there, and you'll come too, won't you, Isabel?"

"Yes, I think so. I'm going to luncheon with Ed, and then, after that, I'm going to Madame Laurestine's to try on some gowns. I

shall spend some time there, but I'll go on to Mrs. Malcolm's and meet you both. Say about six?"

"Yes, or a bit earlier. Good-by, dearie. Where are you lunching?"

"At Sherry's; and then Ed will take me to Madame Laurestine's. He has an engagement this afternoon, so I'm free."

Isabel looked very beautiful as she bade them a smiling good-by and went away. Going down in the elevator, she gave a few admiring touches to her hat, and noted with satisfaction the mirrored reflection. She was of a large and handsome type, and though quite aware of her own good looks, she was not vain or conceited. She dressed in rather better taste than her mother or sister, and to-day, in her quiet black cloth costume, large black hat, and light gray feather boa, she looked correct and inconspicuous. She took a taxicab down to the restaurant, and as it came to a standstill at the *marquise*, Edwin Stuart stood at the curb awaiting her.

"It's a great thing, Isabel," he said, after they were seated at the table he had selected, "for a woman to wear her clothes as well as you do. You look perfectly well dressed in the plainest sort of a rig, and lots of girls don't. One reason is, you've a good idea of color."

"Black is n't a color," returned Isabel, smiling.

"It is for costume purposes. And that gray boa suits you awfully well. But I regret to say you'll have to discard it soon."

"Why? It is n't old-fashioned."

"No, but it has seen its best days. See, it sheds little bits of gray feather all over your coat. And mine, too," he added, as he picked a couple of wisps of ostrich feather from his sleeve.

"I won't wear it again," said the girl, smiling. "Grace told me it was *passé*, but I'm fond of the thing. It's so soft and fluffy. Ed, do you know, they're still throwing that Count at my head."

"Are they, dear? Well, so long as he does n't reach your heart, it does n't matter much. But I won't have you bothered, Isabel. I'll tell you what: let's go and get married this very afternoon."

"Don't be ridiculous! I don't want to do anything so foolish."

"I'm not ridiculous, and it is n't foolish. You do want to marry me, don't you?"

"Yes; but I want a wedding, and a white veil, and an enormous bouquet, and yards of satin train that I can scarcely drag after me. But I want to drag it up the aisle to 'Mendelssohn' and back to 'Lohengrin.' Oh, no, I don't want any impromptu, justice-of-the-peace performance,—and I don't believe you do, either. Why did you say that, Ed?"

"Oh, only because I thought it would save you further molestations from that very objectionable Count." But the young man's manner and expression were not entirely ingenuous. He did not meet

his *fiancée's* direct gaze, but shifted his glance uneasily about the room.

"Oh, he does n't molest me," Isabel declared. "It's really Mother and Grace who do the molesting."

"Well, marry me, and even they shan't molest you any more. Isabel, can't you fix up your white satin and your Lohengrin soon? I don't want to wait long, darling."

The girl looked at him. The words were exactly those of a fond lover to his promised bride, and yet she missed something from the tone that she felt sure ought to have been there. And again, there was his wandering glance. Surely an eager bridegroom would look straight into the eyes of the girl he loved, with a look that would say even more than his words.

But she responded lightly: "Nonsense, boy, we can't be married before spring, of course. I had thought of June, but if you're so insistent, I'll think about April. Not May—that's unlucky."

"Oh, Isabel, do make it sooner than April! That's ages away!"

"Indeed I won't, and I think more likely it will be June. What has made you so impatient all at once? And I've a lot to do before I think about getting married. I have to take over my fortune from Guardy Weatherby, and I have to learn to be a business woman, and keep a bank account, and manage my stocks and bonds, and invest my surplus income. I'm not going to manage my affairs in that silly womanish way everybody makes game of. I'm going to learn real business ways, and I shall take care of my estate as well as any man could. Mr. Weatherby will teach me. I've already asked him to, and he has promised."

"I should think, Isabel, that a married woman would expect her husband to manage her financial affairs."

"That's just where you make a mistake, Edwin mine! That sort of thing was in vogue, I believe, some years ago. But the woman of to-day, if she has any money, looks after it herself. So let's consider that settled before we go any further."

"But I don't like the way you've settled it. I really think, dear, that you're acting in too independent a manner."

"I am independent, Ed, and you know it. You have always known it. And I'm glad we understand each other. I'm of age now, and Guardy is going to give over my estate to me at once. He is going to teach me to take care of it, and as I expect to learn rapidly, that won't take long, and then, after that, I'll promise you that I will begin at once to make preparations for our wedding."

"It does n't become me, Isabel, to object to your plans, but you know how I detest strong-minded women. I hope you will at least turn to me for advice and assistance when you need it."

"When I need it, Ed, I will."

A short silence followed, which began to be a trifle embarrassing, and then Isabel spoke lightly of other subjects, and the question of her financial affairs was not again referred to.

When they left the restaurant, Stuart said, "Which way are you going? Shall we walk for a few blocks?"

"Yes; I'm going up Fifth Avenue to Madame Laurestine's, and I'll ask her what she thinks of an April wedding. Really, she's the most important personage to be considered in the matter."

"How absurd you are! Why do brides think they want such a lot of toggery?"

"And why do bridegrooms always voice that very sentiment, no matter how they express it?"

Stuart laughed. He was a handsome young fellow, a fair type of New York's society man. Courteous, well-mannered, and alert, but with an easy-going effect which was in strong contrast to Isabel's decision of character.

"Well, of course you want me to be a conventional bridegroom; otherwise you'd marry that erratic and uncertain Count. So come along, my lady, and I'll take you up to your modiste's, and then I'm going to the club. But, I say, Isabel, I'm shy for the moment: could you let me have a little money for a few days?"

"Why, of course, Ned, with pleasure. How much do you want?"

"About five hundred dollars, girlie, if you have it by you."

Isabel's curved red lips set themselves in a straight line. "Ned," she said, in a firm voice, "are you going to gamble with it?"

Stuart looked at her disapprovingly, as if to rebuke her bad taste.

"Isabel, you should n't say things like that. In the first place, 'gamble' is not a word to be used among people of our set; and, too, a young girl like you should n't mention such a thing."

Isabel looked him straight in the eyes. "If I'm going to marry you," she said slowly, "there is no subject that I may not mention to you. Especially one so closely connected with your own reputation."

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. I am told there are rumors of your gambling, and when you ask me for money, I'm naturally interested to know if it is for that purpose."

"Your interest seems to me more like curiosity. No, I take that back. Don't let us quarrel. Of course the money is n't for any such purpose, so let me have it, dearie, won't you?"

"I have n't that much with me, Ned, and I don't want to give you such a large sum, any way. But I have to go to the bank to cash a check, and, if you like, we'll go there first, and I'll give you a hundred. Won't that do, Ned?"

"No, that won't do, little one; I hope you can make it a trifle more than that. Let's take a taxicab to the bank."

"Very well," said Isabel.

CHAPTER II.

THE DARK HOUR

It was almost half-past six that same evening when Mrs. Curwood and Grace returned to their apartment in the Ponsonby.

"There was a telephone message, ma'am," said a maid, appearing in the doorway. "Mr. Stuart, ma'am, telephoned that Miss Isabel would go with him to tea."

"Very well, Jane. Did he say what time she would be home?"

"No, ma'am, nothing about that."

"She'll be in soon," said Grace. "I think she was rather clever to go to tea with Ed, instead of that place we went to. Now run along to your room, Motherie, and get a little rest, so you'll look your best this evening. It'll be rather a gorgeous dinner, you know."

It was nearly a half-hour later when Grace Curwood, who was lounging on a couch in her own boudoir, glanced at her clock and concluded it was time she began to dress. She pushed the button of an electric bell, and in a few minutes her maid appeared.

"I'll wear that blue and silver arrangement to-night," she began, sitting up on the couch and untying the ribbons of her pretty negligée gown.

But as she rose, she fell back again to the couch with a startled exclamation. For the room had gone suddenly dark. There was not a glimmer of light, and by sudden contrast it was the very blackness of darkness.

"Good gracious, Marie, what has happened? Something wrong with the electrics, of course. They'll flash on again in a minute."

"Yes, Miss Grace," came Marie's voice through the darkness; "just stay still till they light up, or you may fall over a chair and hurt yourself."

"Oh, I'll stay still," laughed Grace, cuddling back among the pillows. "The longer the lights stay out, the better I'll like it, for it gives me a few moments' more rest. I wonder if Mother is frightened. Can't you grope your way to her, Marie, and tell her to keep still until the lights are right again?"

Marie went away obediently, and Grace could hear her fumbling her way to Mrs. Curwood's room.

But even after Marie had made her way back again, the whole place was still in total darkness.

"Your mother's all right, Miss Grace," said the maid. "She has

a little electric lamp that she has lighted, and she's going on with her toilette. She says, have n't you a candle or something?"

"No, I've no candle and no electric lamp. But if this darkness keeps up, they'll send us some sort of lights from the office, I'm sure. At any rate, I can't go on dressing until I have a light of some kind."

Grace made her way to the window and looked out. The whole nearby portion of the city was dark. "It's a district," she said. "I think the electric light is all portioned out in districts, and if anything goes wrong, the whole section is affected. But I never knew this sort of thing to last so long before."

Marie went away on a search for lights of some sort, and when she returned, bringing candles, she said, "It's a bad lookout, Miss Grace. The janitor sent a boy up with these candles, and, though I did n't get all the right of it, it's a short circuit or something like that, and the whole house is pitch dark. And not only that, but the electric elevators won't work. He says the light and power are both cut off."

"Oh, well, Marie, we must make the best of it. You can do my hair by candle-light; you're such a clever girl, I'm sure you can. And then by the time I have to get into that blue gown, we shall probably have the lights again. Let's hope so, any way."

But by the time that Miss Curwood's beautiful hair had been drawn into the fashionable shape that was decreed that winter, light had not yet been restored. Grace had telephoned to the office, but had received only a corroboration of Marie's account. More candles had been sent up, and the apartment was now fairly well lighted, though out of doors it was still dark.

Grace went to her mother's room. "Shall we go to the dinner?" she said. "We'll have to walk down eight flights of stairs here, and up a lot more at Mrs. Merwin's. The electric elevators are out of commission, you know. Candles will be all right on the dinner table, but I hate to ride through the dark streets, don't you?"

"I don't care anything about the dinner, Grace—whether we go or not; but I'm worried about Isabel. Where do you suppose she is?"

"Oh, she's all right. She's with Ed Stuart, you know, and of course he'll look after her. They probably went to the Plaza for tea."

"Yes, but they would have left there long ago. I hope they're not lost in the darkness."

"Well, they'd be in a taxicab, and by the lights on the cab the driver could find his way here, of course."

"Yes, that's just what worries me. They ought to have been here long ago. It's almost eight o'clock. What can we do? I wish you'd call Ed on the telephone."

"I will, but I know I can't get him. He must be with Isabel, wherever they are."

As they were talking, the electric lights flashed on once more, and the whole place was as light as usual.

"Thank goodness for that!" cried Grace. "But it must have been a bad accident to put out the lights so long. Now we'll have to fly 'round to get to the dinner in time, though of course tardiness is excusable in a case like this."

Mrs. Curwood and Grace returned from the dinner at half-past eleven, only to learn that Isabel had not yet come home.

"Has she telephoned?" asked Mrs. Curwood of Jane, the parlor maid.

"No, ma'am; there has been no message."

"It's the craziest thing I ever heard of," declared Grace. "Isabel is wild about Ed, but she ought to know better than to stay out with him as late as this. Do you suppose they are dining somewhere?"

"I don't know. They've no business to be dining alone together, any way; and if it was brought about by that electrical accident, they surely ought to be home by this time. I'm very much annoyed. I've always let Isabel do as she chose, but she never before did anything that I could criticise. I don't know what to do about it."

"I don't see as you can do anything, Mother. We could telephone to Ed again, but I know we would n't find him at his home or his club, so what's the use? You don't think they've eloped, do you?"

"No, of course not. Isabel cares too much for a showy wedding to do anything like that."

"Well, perhaps they've gone to a theatre."

"That's the only plausible thing to think of. But Isabel is n't dressed for the theatre, and, too, she would have telephoned if they had done that. They may have gone somewhere to call and been persuaded to stay late."

"Well, we can't do anything, so we may as well go to bed. Of course Isabel is all right, since she's with Ed, and when she does come home she'll give a satisfactory explanation, I know."

"Yes, of course she will. Jane will have to sit up for her. I'm glad the lights came up again. Somehow, I feel sure it was because of that accident that they stayed away to dinner."

"Well, don't bother about it; go right to bed, my pretty little mother, and to-morrow morning I shall scold Isabel roundly for the anxiety she has caused you."

Not long after twelve o'clock the Curwoods' apartment was dark, save for its night-lights, and both Grace and her mother slept quietly, without dreaming of the missing Isabel. Jane, occupying an easy chair in the hall, waited up for the late comer. But as the hours went by and Jane's vigil was unbroken, sleep overcame her, and at last her head sank on her breast, and she too slept.

CHAPTER III.

WHERE IS ISABEL?

It was a little more than half-past six the next morning when Grace Curwood was awakened by the murmur of voices. Her drowsy eyes opened slowly, and then stared at the unusual spectacle of three women gathered at her bedside.

They were Jane, Marie, and Ellen, the cook, and all three white faces looked scared and awe-struck.

Marie spoke first. "Oh, Miss Grace," she said, "Miss Isabel has n't come home!"

Grace laughed. "Well, I don't suppose the world will come to an end if she has n't. She must have spent the night at some friend's house."

"Oh, do you think so?" exclaimed Marie, in great relief.

"Of course I think so. Where else could she be? And did you wake me up at this unearthly hour to tell me this? Go away, all of you, and let me finish my sleep."

It was a couple of hours later when Mrs. Curwood wakened, and Marie, bringing her morning tea, told her the news. She did n't take it as calmly as Grace had. Rising at once, she slipped on a kimono and hurried to her daughter's room.

"Grace," she said, "where is Isabel?"

"Goodness, Mother, I don't know. I have n't hidden her."

"But she did n't come home."

"Then she must have stayed out. Probably she stayed overnight at Adelaide Pierson's."

"Oh, Grace, if she had done that she would have telephoned us."

"I should think so; but perhaps the telephones went out of order when the lights went out last night."

"But we telephoned."

"Only in the house. Perhaps the district was affected. I don't know what a district is, but it's always affected if anything goes wrong with the electricity."

"Grace, do be serious. I'm sure something dreadful has happened to Isabel."

"Well, nothing could happen except that she has eloped with Ed Stuart. And that is n't so very dreadful, for she was bound to marry him, any way."

Mrs. Curwood sighed. "I wish she would give him up; he's undesirable in every way. And I'm almost certain Count Kovroff is interested in Isabel."

"Interested! I should say he was! But she won't look at him; she sees nobody but Ed Stuart. Run along, Mother, and get dressed.

Isabel will turn up all right. Of course she has n't really eloped, and you'll hear from her soon."

Mrs. Curwood went back to her room, but Grace's prophecy was not fulfilled. When ten o'clock came, and no sign of the girl, even Grace began to feel anxious.

"I think I'll telephone Ed Stuart," she said, "and he'll tell us where she went last night, after he left her."

"Will he be at his office yet?"

"I think so; if not, I'll call him up at his rooms."

Grace succeeded in getting Stuart on the telephone, but as she talked with him, her face assumed a bewildered expression.

"I can't understand it," she said, going back to her mother. "Ed says he left Isabel yesterday afternoon at Madame Laurestine's, and he has n't seen her since."

"What?" exclaimed Mrs. Curwood.

"Now, don't get excited, Mother; it's all right, I'm sure. Isabel spent most of the afternoon trying on gowns, and then she went to Adelaide's or somewhere, and stayed there all night. At any rate, she has n't eloped with Ed."

"But, Grace, Mr. Stuart telephoned, you know, that he was taking Isabel to tea. Jane said so."

"Why, so she did! I had forgotten that. Mother, there is something queer about it all. I'm going to telephone Mr. Stuart again."

After her second conversation with the young man, Grace was more mystified than ever.

"He says that he did n't take Isabel to tea, and that he did n't telephone up here at all. But he's coming up here himself, right away. He seems to think there's something wrong."

"Something wrong! I should say there was. If he did n't telephone, who did?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. I'll ask Jane about it."

But Jane, when summoned and questioned, could only repeat the message that had been given her.

"It was a gentleman's voice, Miss Grace; and he said, 'Tell Mrs. Curwood that Miss Isabel is going to tea with me.' And I said, 'Who is this, please?' And he said, 'Mr. Stuart.' And then he shut off, quick like."

"Are you sure it was Mr. Stuart's voice?" asked Grace.

"I'm not sure, Miss Grace. I could n't tell his voice over the telephone. But that's what he said."

"Of course it was n't Ed Stuart's voice, if he says he did n't telephone yesterday," said Mrs. Curwood. "It's all very strange, Grace."

"It is indeed, Mother. Perhaps she has eloped with Count Kovroff."

"If that's the case, I'll forgive her gladly. But that isn't it. Grace, some accident has happened to Isabel."

"Oh, pshaw, Mother! Don't let's think that until we have to. I'm sure Isabel's all right, but I can't understand that telephone message."

"I'm sure it was Ed Stuart that telephoned, though. Who else could it be? And this morning, for some reason, he sees fit to deny it. He's a rogue, Grace, and I would n't trust him as far as I could see him."

"Well, you'll see him soon, Mother, and as we can't do anything in the meantime, let's stop worrying about it."

Grace went away to her own pursuits, but the mother's anxiety was not so easily allayed. Mrs. Curwood was a frivolous-minded matron, and often thought more about her own gayeties and entertainments than about her daughters' welfare; but this state of things was largely because her daughters' welfare had always been seemingly assured. Now that there was a possibility that something untoward had happened, Mrs. Curwood was as much troubled and alarmed as if she had been a mother of the brooding and hovering type.

After what seemed to her an interminable wait, Stuart arrived.

He came in with his usual debonair manner, and a quizzical smile played on his handsome face as he said, "What's all this about my taking Isabel to tea? I did ask her, but she refused my further hospitality. We had lunch together, you know, and I think she felt she had seen enough of me for one day."

"But where did she go after she left you?" asked Mrs. Curwood eagerly.

"Why, I left her at Madame Laurestine's. She said she was going to be there most of the afternoon, looking at some of that lady's newest importations."

"Yes," said Mrs. Curwood thoughtfully; "she did n't have a fitting engagement; she just went there to look at some models. But where did she go after that?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. I offered to come back for her and take her to tea, but she said no, she wanted to go home early, as she was dining out."

"Then she *did* intend to go to the Merwins' dinner, after all!" exclaimed Grace. "But she seemed to cut out the Malcolm tea."

"But where is she?" urged Mrs. Curwood. "Mr. Stuart, something must have happened to her."

"This is the funny part," said Grace. "We were out at a tea, Mother and I, and when we came home Jane said that you had telephoned that you were taking Isabel to tea."

"Why, I did n't do any such thing!" declared Stuart. "I did n't see Isabel after three o'clock, and I've no idea where she went. I did n't telephone. Your maid must have mistaken the name."

"That must be it," agreed Grace. "She said she did n't recognize your voice, but, then, one would n't expect her to, and she said she's sure that the gentleman said he was Mr. Stuart."

"What other name sounds like Stuart?" inquired the young man thoughtfully. And then he added, with a smile, "Kovroff does n't!"

"That's the worst of it," said Grace, smiling too. "If it had been Count Kovroff, Mother would n't mind a bit. In fact, she's hoping that Isabel has eloped with him."

"You make a mistake, Mrs. Curwood," said Stuart gravely. "Count Kovroff is a new man among us, and I'm by no means sure that his credentials are unimpeachable."

"That's what Isabel says," declared Grace, "and I know she'd never run away with him. She hates him. I think she just went to stay overnight with one of the girls, and she never dreamed we'd be anxious about her."

"Well, I think there is some cause for anxiety. Why don't you telephone to some of her friends?"

"Oh, if you and Mother are both going to be anxious, I'll have to do that to prove my case. I'll call up Adelaide first."

For the better part of an hour, Grace was at the telephone. After calling up various houses where Isabel might be, she called up unlikely ones, but all with the same result. No one seemed to have seen or heard of Isabel Curwood the afternoon before. And now Grace herself was not only as anxious as the other two, but even more so.

"Something has happened," she declared, as she hung up the receiver after her last futile call. "Something dreadful has happened to Isabel. What shall we do, Mr. Stuart? How can we find her?"

"Oh, we'll find her. I can't think anything dreadful has happened. But it's mighty queer about the telephone message. I can't think why any one should have used my name."

"What time did you leave Isabel yesterday, at the dressmaker's?" asked Mrs. Curwood.

"It was just about three; a trifle after, perhaps."

"Did you go right there from luncheon?"

"Yes," replied Stuart, but he spoke after an instant's hesitation.

"Did Isabel seem in good spirits?" asked Grace.

"Oh, yes, of course. Don't talk as if you thought she went off to drown herself! And how could a girl be other than in good spirits, when she was going to look at Paris gowns? And I may as well tell you, Mrs. Curwood, that we discussed the date of our wedding day. I persuaded her to consider April as a good time to get married."

Mrs. Curwood looked displeased. "You know, Mr. Stuart," she said, "I have never given my consent to your engagement to Isabel. Though nowadays a parent's consent is not considered necessary, I believe."

"You believe quite right," said young Stuart gayly. "So long as you don't put any definite obstacle in our way, we consider ourselves engaged. By Jove, I wish I *had* eloped with her yesterday, and then we'd know where she is now. But, Mrs. Curwood, there's no use blinking the fact that something must have happened. I confess I'm alarmed, and I think we should set to work at once to find out where she is."

"But what can we do?" asked the mother helplessly.

"The first thing to do," said Grace decidedly, "is to send for Mr. Weatherby. If the matter is serious, which I can't think it is, he's the one to consult."

"Send for him, Grace," said her mother, "and meantime I'll go and lie down. I feel faint."

"Now, don't do the despairing act, Mother. Isabel's all right, and you'll find that Mr. Weatherby will take a sensible view of it."

Leonard Weatherby arrived shortly, and was soon in possession of the facts of Isabel's disappearance. Mr. Weatherby was a capable-looking man, and seemed the very one to whom to turn in a disagreeable predicament.

He was of the large type often described as portly, and his face wore the imperturbable expression of a man of the world. His black hair was gray at the temples, and his large, dark eyes and olive complexion gave him somewhat the look of an actor. There was decision of character shown in his strong, square chin, and, on the whole, Leonard Weatherby was a man whom the most casual observer would recognize as a power and a strength.

And indeed he seemed so to the Curwood ladies, and both they and young Stuart felt a sense of confidence in his presence.

"Of course the girl's all right," he said, in his hearty way. "I'm quite sure she hasn't been abducted, and I trust no accident has happened. But we must do all we can to find her. You say you telephoned to all her girl friends?"

"Yes," replied Grace; "even to those houses where I am positive she never would have gone."

"Then," went on Mr. Weatherby gently, "I can't think of anything else but to telephone the hospitals. Now, don't faint," he added, as Mrs. Curwood turned white. "You know, in case of even a slight accident, if Isabel had been alone, she would have been taken to a hospital."

"But in that case they would have telephoned us!" cried Grace.

"Yes—that is, unless——"

"You mean, unless she were unconscious! Oh, Mr. Weatherby, how can you make such dreadful suggestions?" And Grace clapped her hands over her ears.

"I did n't, Grace; you suggested it yourself. But surely it can do no harm to inquire at the hospitals, for if she is n't there, you'll certainly feel relieved."

"That's true enough;" and again Grace went to the telephone.

But a round-up of the hospitals brought no news of Isabel Curwood.

"Just as I expected!" exclaimed Grace, as she returned to the group. "Of course I'm glad Isabel is n't in the hospitals, but I wish I knew where she is. What shall we do next, Mr. Weatherby?"

"I don't see that you can do anything, except wait for her to come home. There are dozens of things that might have happened. Perhaps she met some friend who took her motoring, and the car broke down a long distance from anywhere. It might easily happen that they could n't telephone, and perhaps they stayed at some farm-house overnight, or even camped out under the stars."

"Why, of course that's it!" declared Mrs. Curwood, her volatile nature responding to this happy thought. "Why did n't we think of that before? Mr. Weatherby, you're a great comfort! I'm sure your supposition is right."

"Well, we'll see; and in the meantime there's nothing to do but wait."

"I don't agree with you," said Grace, in her straightforward way. "If she'd been in a motor accident, and was n't killed, Isabel would have let us know somehow before this."

"Oh, probably not an accident," put in Mr. Weatherby; "just a burst tire, or some delay of that sort. Don't take it so seriously, Grace."

"I did n't at first," returned Grace, "but now I feel sure that it is serious. There is no rational or explainable place that Isabel could be, from which she could n't have sent us word. And I know what I'm going to do. I'm going to send for Mr. Britton."

"Yes, let us do so," said Mr. Weatherby, "though I don't know what he could do more than we can."

"I don't know either, but he's our lawyer, and when anything like this happens, he ought to be called in."

"I think so, too," said Mrs. Curwood. "Of course, Mr. Weatherby, you and Mr. Stuart and Grace and I are all deeply concerned for Isabel's welfare, but perhaps the very depth of our feeling makes us less capable of rational action than an outsider. Mr. Britton is cool-headed and clear-headed, and as our family lawyer I think he should be consulted."

"I agree with you, Mrs. Curwood," Mr. Weatherby said, "for I now begin to fear that it is a serious matter; although, of course, Isabel may come in at any moment."

"Well, there's no harm done if she does," said Grace, jumping up and going once more to the telephone. "I'm going to call Mr. Britton, any way."

"Tell him what has happened," said her mother, "and then he can come here or not, as he sees fit."

After Grace's conversation with the lawyer, she came slowly back to her former seat, with a white, scared face.

"He's very much alarmed," she said, "and he's coming right up here. He wants Mr. Weatherby and Mr. Stuart to stay until he comes."

"Of course we'll stay," declared Weatherby. "If Britton thinks the matter serious, it may be so. He's a fair-minded man, as I recall him. I don't know him very well."

"I don't know him at all," said Stuart, "but if he can find Isabel for us, he's a good fellow."

But James Britton was about the last man in the world to whom one would apply the term "a good fellow" in its usually accepted significance. Small of stature, sharp-featured, alert, and energetic, his whole make-up betokened a hard-headed lawyer of an ascetic temperament. He was a little given, however, to bustle and fluster, and he entered Mrs. Curwood's library with a quick, nervous step and delivered himself of hasty, flurried greetings.

"What—what's all this about? Isabel gone? Disappeared? Who saw her last?"

"So far as we four know, I did," replied Stuart, and then he told the lawyer of his parting with Isabel at the door of the fashionable modiste's the afternoon before.

"Did she say how long she would remain there?" asked Mr. Britton concisely.

"She said she would be there some time, and afterward would go directly home. But she didn't say this definitely, and if she met any friends, at the dressmaker's or afterwards, she might easily have gone somewhere with them."

"Never mind what she might have done," the lawyer flung out. "The question is what she did do."

"That I can't tell you," replied Stuart, a trifle annoyed at the lawyer's brusque manner.

"Then we must find out some other way. You're the last person that we know to have seen her, Mr. Stuart. But we assume that the next one was this dressmaker you tell of. Let us telephone her at once."

"What a sensible idea!" cried Grace. "I felt sure, Mr. Britton, you'd know what to do. I'll call her."

But after Grace had succeeded in getting Madame Laurestine on the wire, and had talked with her a moment, she turned and asked Mr. Britton to speak to her.

The fussy little lawyer flew to the telephone, and his short, crisp sentences brought consternation to the anxious four who were listening to him.

"Not at all? . . . Are you sure? . . . Yesterday—yesterday afternoon. . . . Please be very certain; it is most important. . . . Thank you, that is all."

He turned from the telephone and announced curtly, "Isabel was not at Madame Laurestine's at all, yesterday afternoon."

This speech was received with utter silence on the part of his auditors, for each of the four was dumfounded. Edwin Stuart turned perfectly white, and Mr. Weatherby looked at him curiously, his dark eyes narrowing and his square chin setting itself firmly.

Mrs. Curwood looked both stunned and bewildered; and it was Grace who first found voice to exclaim:

"Then what do you mean, Ed Stuart, by saying that you left her there?"

"But I did," half stammered the young man, and still Leonard Weatherby's dark eyes gazed at him with a look of unbelief.

CHAPTER IV.

THE APARTMENT IN THE HAMMERSMITH

A WELL-DRESSED and quiet-looking lady walked slowly along one of the streets among the upper Forties. She had been on several other streets in her endeavor to find an apartment that combined all the especial advantages she desired, but never did she stray very far from Fifth Avenue.

She paused in front of a carved stone entrance, and, taking in the general effect of the house at a glance, she gave an approving little nod. The doors opened at her approach, and she said to the hall-boy, "Is this the Hammersmith?"

"Yes, madam," responded that rather ornate personage, in conventional tones.

"I wish to see the janitor. Please call him."

"Yes, madam;" and in a fairly reasonable time the janitor of the Hammersmith appeared.

"You have a vacant apartment, I believe?" asked Mrs. Dellenbaugh, in the business-like manner of one who has interviewed many janitors regarding vacant apartments.

"Y'yes, ma'am;" and Mrs. Dellenbaugh stared slightly at the unusual spectacle of a janitor who was deferential instead of pompous.

"Very well; I wish to see it."

"Yes; certainly—of course. This way, madam."

As the elevator rose, Mrs. Dellenbaugh concluded she had been mistaken in the janitor's mental attitude, for as she looked at him longer, she observed that he bore himself rather with an air of swaggering bravado.

But Mrs. Dellenbaugh was an experienced house-hunter, and accustomed to all sorts of apartments and all types of attendants who showed them off.

The elevator stopped at the third floor, and the janitor preceded Mrs. Dellenbaugh to the entrance of the vacant apartment. The door was not locked, and he threw it open with a flourish.

"Very attractive hall," Mrs. Dellenbaugh murmured, as her quick eyes took instant note of the white Doric columns and elaborate door-frames. Together they went through several rooms, the lady commenting on details that pleased her, and the janitor mumbling agreement with her opinions.

At the entrance of one of the bedrooms, the man stepped aside to let Mrs. Dellenbaugh precede him, when she gave a gasp, and fell back almost into his arms.

"What's the matter, ma'am?" he said hastily, as she put both hands over her eyes and seemed about to faint. "Don't scream," he added, as, after looking into the room himself, he led the trembling lady away from the door.

"I'm not going to scream," she said, and, though her voice was faint, she was evidently regaining her composure by sheer force of will. "I'm not the screaming sort; but—but there's a dead woman in there!"

Though still trembling, she was standing now without the man's support, and perhaps of the two he was the more shaken.

"Maybe she is n't dead, ma'am," he whispered, as he cast furtive glances toward the door, but made no move to enter.

"Oh, she is! I'm sure she is! But if she should n't be, we must go to her assistance. Go ahead, and I'll follow."

"Oh, please don't make me go in there, ma'am! I—I'm awful sensitive about such things. Let us go downstairs, and send for somebody, ma'am."

"Coward! What sort of a man are you? You're in charge of this place, and it's your duty to investigate this thing. Come, if you won't go first, I will. We must see what is the matter with that poor woman."

Mrs. Dellenbaugh stepped across the threshold, and as she

approached the quiet figure lying on the floor, her look of horror turned to one of compassion.

"The poor girl!" she exclaimed. "What can have happened to her? What is your name, man?"

"Taylor, ma'am."

"Well, Taylor, don't stand there like a trembling idiot. This is an awful emergency; now do your part, like a man. This young woman is beautiful and well-to-do. She must have come here because she wanted to end her life, or it may have been death from illness."

"Are you—are you sure she's dead, ma'am?"

"Of course she is. She's stone cold. But it is n't our business to say so; in fact, we ought n't even to touch her. You must send for a doctor at once. Oh, have n't you any sense at all? Don't stand there looking perfectly blank! Go at once and telephone for some doctor. Do you know of any?"

"I—I think, ma'am, it will be better to call the police first. I think that's what we ought to do."

"Well, I'm glad you've waked up to the fact that we ought to do something! I expect you're right. Go and call the police, then, and go at once."

"And leave you alone with—with that, ma'am?"

"Yes; I'm not afraid. Of course I was shocked at first, but I'm not one of those foolish women who lose their wits in an emergency. Can't you telephone directly from this apartment, without going downstairs?"

"Yes, I'll tell the hall-boy, ma'am, to step out and bring in the policeman on this beat. Then he can telephone headquarters himself."

Taylor went back to the telephone, which was in the hall, and Mrs. Dellenbaugh immediately proved that her feminine trait of curiosity was stronger than her equally feminine attribute of nerves.

With no effects of fear or horror, she scrutinized the appearance and belongings of the dead girl. She noted the quiet elegance of her tailored costume, the beautiful fashion of her French hat, and the exquisite correctness of all the minor details of her apparel. With a swift glance at the door, she hurriedly opened the girl's wrist-bag and glanced over the contents. She even drew out a visiting card and looked at it, replacing it just in time to escape the notice of the returning janitor.

"I've sent for the policeman, ma'am, and he'll be here soon."

"Very well. Have you any idea, Taylor, who this can be?"

"No, ma'am, indeed I have n't."

"It is n't any one, then, that lived in this house?"

"No; I never saw the lady before. Did you?"

At this sudden question, Mrs. Dellenbaugh looked a little embar-

rased. "No, I never did," she replied; "but one can see at a glance that she was refined and well-bred. It's very mysterious."

The hall-boy came in, followed by a tall policeman. Both men were very white, and shuddered at the sight they faced. Indeed, it seemed strange that Mrs. Dellenbaugh should show composure and even curiosity when all of the men present were nervously shaken.

"You, Henry, you go back to the door," said the janitor gruffly. "There's no call for you to stay here. And I say, officer, you don't need me, do you?"

"Let the hall-boy go, Taylor, but you stay here and answer a few questions. You can't have a dead girl found in your house, and walk off without a word. Where did she come from, and who killed her?"

"Oh, she has n't been killed, has she?" exclaimed Mrs. Dellenbaugh.

"Yes, ma'am, she has; and may I ask who are you?"

"I'm Mrs. Roger Dellenbaugh; and I came here to look at this apartment, with a view to renting it. The janitor brought me up to show me the rooms, and here we found this girl."

The policeman looked at her in admiration. "Mighty few ladies can tell a story so brief-like and to the point," he commented. "Perhaps you had better stay, ma'am, until I can get the Coroner here. But I'll guarantee that he won't keep you long, if that's all you know about this case."

"That's all; and I'm quite willing to stay until the Coroner comes. I know nothing of the case, as you call it; but I might be able to assist in some way. Shall you send for the poor girl's friends?"

The officer gave her a swift glance. "How can we, ma'am, when we don't know who she is? Do you know?"

"How could I know?" evaded Mrs. Dellenbaugh. "I never saw her before, of that I'm sure."

At that, the policeman seemed to lose all interest in Mrs. Dellenbaugh's presence, and devoted his attention to telephoning for the Coroner, and for an inspector from headquarters as well.

"It's going to be a big case," he remarked; "bigger than anything that's happened around here for a long time. You can go downstairs if you like, Taylor, but don't leave the house."

In rather a shorter time than Mrs. Dellenbaugh had dared to hope, the Coroner arrived, and almost simultaneously Inspector Fox appeared.

It did not take the Coroner long to learn such facts as were evident, and after examination of the body he announced briefly, "The poor lady was strangled—choked to death—by some brute. How could it have happened in this house? Are any of the other apartments vacant?"

"No," answered Taylor; "all the others are occupied."

"Here's her name and address," said Coroner Hills, opening the

wrist-bag that Mrs. Dellenbaugh had already investigated. "At least, we have reason to suppose that the card in this little card-case is hers."

"Who is she?" asked the Inspector, and Hills read, "Miss Curwood. The Ponsonby."

"That's up on Seventy-Second Street," said Inspector Fox. "Better telephone up to her people."

"Oh, don't do anything like that!" exclaimed Mrs. Dellenbaugh. "Think how it would shock them!"

The Inspector looked at her curiously. "What would you suggest?" he inquired, with just a trace of irony in his tone.

"There must be some other way," she said, looking thoughtful. "Why don't you call up, say, the superintendent of the Ponsonby, and ask him something about her."

Mr. Fox's manner changed. "That's right," he said. "Women always have more tact than men. It's an awful business, any way."

And that was how it happened that Mr. Merritt, superintendent of the Ponsonby apartment house, presented himself to the little group assembled in Mrs. Curwood's drawing-room, just as they were discussing the advisability of asking police aid to search for the missing Isabel.

Not at all liking the duty he had to perform, Mr. Merritt stood looking from Mrs. Curwood to her lawyer and back again. Mr. Weatherby and Ed Stuart were there also, as they had been most of the day, but, as usual, it was Grace who took the initiative.

"You've heard something from Isabel, I know you have!" she exclaimed; and as Mr. Merritt bowed his head in grave assent she went on: "Something dreadful has happened to her, I know it has! You may as well tell us at once what it is!"

"Wait a moment!" cried Mr. Weatherby, springing to Mrs. Curwood's side. "Don't be brutal. If you've anything unpleasant to tell, tell me or Britton first."

"Yes, indeed," said the lawyer, as, jumping up, he took Mr. Merritt by the arm and drew him into the next room.

Grace too ran to her mother's assistance, and Ed Stuart followed, for at the first appearance of Mr. Merritt, Mrs. Curwood had felt forebodings of trouble, and at Grace's words about Isabel she had given a low moan and fainted away.

Stuart rang for Marie, and as she appeared, with Jane also, Mrs. Curwood was left to their care and Grace's, while the men gathered in the other room to hear Mr. Merritt's story.

He told them that an inspector had telephoned him from the Hammersmith, and that there was reason to believe the dead girl found there was Isabel Curwood. Also, the inspector requested that some one come down there immediately to identify the body.

The three men listening were aghast at this statement, and Lawyer Britton spoke first:

"It may not be Isabel, you know, after all. So don't tell the whole story to Mrs. Curwood and Grace until we are certain. I suggest that Mr. Stuart stay here with them, and Mr. Weatherby and I will go down to the place at once, and see for ourselves. Mr. Weatherby is Isabel's guardian——"

"But I am more closely related to Isabel than that," broke in Edwin Stuart impetuously. "Let me go with you, Mr. Britton, and let Mr. Weatherby stay with the ladies."

"As you like," responded the Lawyer. "What do you say, Weatherby?"

"Whatever you think best, Britton. If Stuart prefers to go with you, I will stay in charge of things here. Let us hope there is some mistake in the message Mr. Merritt received."

"There must be!" cried Stuart. "It can't be that our Isabel is——"

"Of course the inspector told me but the merest facts," said Mr. Merritt, "and he said they based their knowledge of the girl's identity on a card found in her card-case."

"But sometimes ladies have other ladies' cards with them," suggested Stuart, catching at any hope, however faint.

"So they do, my boy," said Mr. Britton kindly. "Come with me, then, and we will go at once. We'll telephone back, Weatherby, whatever we may find out."

"Telephone to Mr. Merritt, then. Don't stir up this apartment, that is, unless you have good news for us. And I'm afraid Mrs. Curwood is pretty ill. Perhaps we'd better send for a doctor for her."

"No," said Grace, coming into the room; "Mother's quite herself now. Mr. Merritt, tell me what this is about my sister. Tell me the worst at once. It is my right to know."

"We're not sure there is any worst, Grace," said Mr. Weatherby. "There has been an accident to a young woman, and while it may be Isabel, yet it may not. Don't worry, my dear, until you are sure you have cause to."

The other three men had already left the apartment, and as Mr. Weatherby would tell her nothing further of the report that had been received, Grace was forced to control her anxiety as best she could.

Mr. Weatherby advised her, very sensibly, to do all she could to lessen her mother's fears, and this had the effect of lightening in a measure her own terrible anxiety.

Meantime, the two men, in a taxicab, were hastening to their destination.

The hall-boy at the Hammersmith directed them, and soon they stood in the presence of the lifeless remains of Isabel Curwood.

"There is no doubt about it," said Mr. Britton, as after the briefest of glances he turned away.

"Doubt? No indeed," declared Stuart, as he stood gazing at the beautiful white face. "What can it mean, Mr. Britton? Who could have done it?"

"Are you sure it is murder?" asked the Lawyer of Inspector Fox.

"Sure, yes, sir. The poor lady was strangled, and the marks on her neck show it. But the Coroner says she must be taken to Bellevue for the autopsy."

Edwin Stuart shuddered at the awful suggestion, but Mr. Britton said: "Yes, that must be done, for of course we must discover who killed her. It seems incredible that any one could have done so. That beautiful young girl!"

"But before the body is removed, sir," said Mr. Hills, "we must have an inquest."

"Is that necessary?" asked Mr. Britton.

"Yes, sir; it must be done. It probably won't take long. Six'll be enough for a jury. Taylor, you can round up that many in the house, can't you?"

"Probably, yes, sir."

"Then go ahead. Get six men from the apartments, and bring them in here as soon as you can."

The janitor went away, leaving Stuart and Britton aghast at the business-like way in which the affair was carried on. But the bare fact of Isabel's death was so appalling, that the minor details of procedure seemed insignificant in comparison.

In accordance with his promise, Mr. Britton telephoned to the superintendent of the Ponsonby, and told him that the dead girl was Isabel beyond all doubt, and that he must tell Mr. Weatherby, who would break the news to the Curwood ladies.

At last the six men appeared. They were for the most part unwilling to perform the duty required of them, but there was no evasion of the law possible, and they were obliged to do their part in the processes of the inquest.

Though rather informal, it was all conducted in a business-like way, and, the jury being sworn, Coroner Hills produced his witnesses.

Taylor, the janitor, was called first, and, though his manner was embarrassed and perturbed, and his speech hesitating and almost stammering, his evidence was simple and merely stated that when showing a lady through the vacant apartment, they had discovered the body.

"When were you last in this apartment before?" inquired the Coroner.

"Day before yesterday."

"And it was then empty? No sign of any one having been in it?"

"No, sir; no sign of anybody."

"And you weren't in this apartment yesterday?"

"No, sir; nobody called to see it, and I had no occasion to come in."

"Is it kept locked?"

"No, sir; we never keep the vacant apartments locked."

"Why not?"

"Because there's nothing in them to steal, and no outsider can get in without our knowledge."

"But apparently some one did get in without your knowledge. Or did you see Miss Curwood enter the house?"

"Oh, no, sir; I did n't see her come in. But the hall-boy must have seen her."

"We'll ask him about that later. Then the first you knew of this—this tragedy, was when you came in here with the lady who came to see this vacant apartment?"

"Why—yes, sir," replied Taylor, and the Coroner looked at him curiously as he heard the hesitating answer. To be sure, the man was undergoing a severe ordeal, for janitors do not often have such terrible experiences. But to Coroner Fox, and also to Mr. Britton, the agitation of the man seemed of a deeper import than the natural repugnance that might be expected.

"That is all at present," said Mr. Hills. "We will next make a few inquiries of Mrs. Dellenbaugh."

CHAPTER V.

AN INFORMAL INQUEST

MRS. DELLENBAUGH was called in from an adjoining apartment, whither she had gone to await her summons.

Her evidence was merely a corroboration of what the janitor had said. She declared she had never been in the house before, and had come there that day because it was one of the addresses given her by a real-estate agent, through whom she was seeking a new apartment.

"Had you any reason to think," asked the Coroner, "that the janitor might have had previous knowledge of this crime, before he brought you up to see these rooms?"

"No," said Mrs. Dellenbaugh promptly; and then, with a little start, she said: "Why, I don't know. Since you put it that way, perhaps I ought to say that the man *did* act a little queer. But I don't want to say anything that would cast unjust suspicion on him."

"Never mind that," said Mr. Hills. "Just tell the truth, and let suspicion fall where it may. In what way did he act queer?"

"Well, perhaps not queer exactly, but he seemed nervous and hesitating about showing me the apartment."

"Most unusual conduct for a janitor. What have you to say about this, Taylor?"

Owing to the informality of the inquest, the evidence was not given from a witness-box, but the Coroner questioned one or another as he chose.

"I was n't nervous," asserted Taylor, "and of course I had no objection to showing the lady the apartment. Do you suppose I should have brought her up here if I had known what was here?"

"No," said the Coroner thoughtfully; "I don't believe you would."

After a few more inquiries were addressed to Mrs. Dellenbaugh, the Coroner concluded she knew nothing of the affair save what she had told, and he next questioned Henry, the hall-boy.

"Did you ever see this lady before?" he asked, as he glanced indicatively at the still figure on the floor.

"No, sir," replied Henry, in a scared voice.

"But she must have come into this building alive, and if so, would you not see her enter?"

"Unless it was on the other hall-boy's shift."

"Yes, of course. But, during your hours on duty, you are sure you did not see her?"

"Sure, sir. I always notice anybody who comes in, who does n't live here. When did she come in, sir?"

"That we don't know, but we have reason to think it was yesterday afternoon. We have reason to think, also, that this lady was killed right here in this room, yesterday afternoon about five o'clock."

"How do you know the hour?" asked Mr. Britton, who up to this point had listened to the evidence without saying a word himself.

"Because," replied the Coroner, "there was a small watch set in the flap of the lady's hand-bag, and the watch is stopped at ten minutes after five. The crystal is broken, and this seems to show evidence of a violent death-struggle."

"It would seem so," assented Mr. Britton, after glancing at the damaged watch then shown by the Coroner.

"Then, if the lady came in before five o'clock," said Henry, "and if it was after one o'clock, I was on duty; and I'm sure I did n't see her."

"Perhaps you can tell us when Miss Curwood was last seen?" asked the Coroner, turning to Mr. Britton.

"I believe it was about three o'clock in the afternoon," returned the Lawyer. He did not look toward Stuart, for he remembered that the story the young man had told of leaving Isabel at three o'clock at Madame Laurestine's did not coincide with that lady's assertions.

Stuart himself said nothing. The Coroner had not questioned him, and he made no comment on Britton's statement.

"Then," went on Mr. Hills, "we know Miss Curwood to have been alive at three o'clock yesterday, and we have reason to think she met her death at five o'clock."

"Could it have been five o'clock this morning?" asked one of the jurors.

"That is a well-taken point," returned the Coroner; "but the state of the body proves to my mind that death occurred much sooner than that. I should have put the hour at seven or eight o'clock last evening. But the broken watch seems to me to indicate the exact time. If Mr. Britton or Mr. Stuart can give us no further light on the subject, I think we may conclude the evidence is all in."

The Lawyer waited a few moments, and as Edwin Stuart said nothing, Mr. Britton spoke: "I think, Mr. Coroner, that we can give you no information whatever. Miss Curwood's family and friends began to be anxious about her last evening, because she did not return home. Then when she did not appear to-day, of course the anxiety deepened, and this afternoon we had about decided to call in police assistance, when we were informed of your discovery. It goes without saying that we shall make every effort to find the murderer and avenge the crime, but so far as we're concerned, we can throw no light on it at present. But are you sure that there are no clues or indications of any sort to be found in the room?"

"I think not, Mr. Britton. You see, in an unfurnished room like this, there is small chance for definite clues. However, both Inspector Fox and myself have examined the apartment, and I think we have found nothing that could possibly be construed as evidence. Have you, Inspector?"

"Nothing important," said Mr. Fox, but as he spoke, he took from his pocket an envelope, which he handed to the Coroner. "That's all I found, and I don't suppose they mean anything."

From the envelope, Mr. Hills took two or three burnt matches. They were very slender and of a red color, and their ragged ends showed that they had been torn from a small pocket match-card.

"This may be important," said the Coroner thoughtfully, "for it is fairly dark at five o'clock, these afternoons. There is perhaps a possibility of tracing the murderer by these matches. However, as the victim was strangled, one can scarcely imagine the criminal committing the vile deed by the tiny light of a match."

"But of course," said the Inspector, "he would n't want to turn on the electric light in this vacant apartment, and thereby call attention to his presence here."

"Of course not; but as it would require both his hands to accom-

plish his awful purpose, he could not at the same time hold a lighted match. I fear, Inspector, that these burnt matches have nothing to do with our case. But I will keep them on the chance that they may."

"What sort of matches are they?" asked one of the jurors, stepping forward to look at them. "Oh, the bought kind. Now, a smoker would carry the free kind."

"That's so!" exclaimed Inspector Fox, looking admiringly at the astute man who had made the suggestion.

"You see," went on the juror, pulling a small card of matches from his own vest pocket, "I carry the free kind. They give them to you as advertisements, you know, at any cigar store. But these burned matches you have here came from the sort of a card that is sold. So I deduce that the murderer was not a smoker."

A murmur of admiration was heard through the little assembly, but was quickly suppressed as another of the jurors then remarked, "If he were not a smoker, why would he carry matches at all?"

This completely floored the propounder of the match theory, but he endeavored to regain his ground by saying, "He would n't, that's a fact. But I suppose some smokers do buy their own matches. Let's investigate. All you jurymen show up the matches you have with you, and let's see."

As a result of this, it was shown that three other jurymen were provided with free matches from various cigar-stores. Another was not a smoker, and carried none. While the last one, though a smoker, chanced to have no matches with him at the moment.

"How about the rest of us?" said Mr. Britton, greatly interested. "I have free matches; have you, Stuart?"

"I have my club matches," replied Edwin Stuart, drawing a half-used card from his pocket.

"Let's see your matches, Taylor," said the Coroner suddenly.

"I'm—I'm not a smoker, sir. It is n't allowed."

"Then you don't carry matches?"

"N'no, sir."

If the man's statements had been made in a frank, straightforward manner, the Coroner would not have doubted them, but, owing to the embarrassment he showed, Mr. Hills was conscious of a vague suspicion.

"I should think," he said quietly, "that it might be wise for a janitor to have matches at hand, in case of various needs, other than his own smoking. Are you sure you have none in your pockets, Taylor?"

"Sure, sir." But the white face and trembling lips so belied the words that the statement was unbelievable.

"Let me see," said Inspector Fox, and with a sudden swift movement he drew from the janitor's vest-pocket a card of matches. As he

handed them to the Coroner, the jurymen pressed forward, and not one of them was surprised to see that the red matches on the janitor's card were of precisely the same kind as the burnt matches that had been found on the floor of the room.

The Coroner looked gravely at Taylor. "Why did you say you had no matches?" he said sternly.

Those who had looked for a frightened collapse on the janitor's part were destined to a surprise. Instead of seeming embarrassed, Taylor straightened up at the question, and spoke more manfully than he had yet done:

"I said so because I knew those were my matches you had found, and I feared they might connect me with this—this trouble."

"They do seem to suggest something of the sort," said Mr. Hills.

"But I had nothing to do with it, sir;" and now the janitor's strong, earnest tones seemed to carry conviction to his hearers.

"Can you explain the presence of the matches in this room?"

"Certainly, sir. It was night before last, sir, that I feared a storm was coming up, and I came into this vacant apartment to make sure the front windows were closed. One of the catches did n't work easily, and I lighted some matches to see what ailed it. Afterward I threw them on the floor, I suppose, without thinking anything about it."

It is strange how the steadiness of a man's voice will bear witness to his truth-telling. At least, it seemed so to Lawyer Britton. He felt convinced that this story of Taylor's was true, because the man told it without hesitation and without a tremor in his accents. Moreover, Britton could think of no reason why a janitor of an apartment house should kill Isabel Curwood.

Taylor was rigidly cross-examined, but he adhered strictly to his story, and his whole air was one of relief at having passed the danger point. Mr. Britton felt sure that the man had dreaded the tracing of the matches to himself, but now that the accusation had been made and met, Taylor seemed to have no further fears.

Though perhaps not so fully convinced as Mr. Britton, the Coroner seemed to arrive at pretty nearly the same conclusions; but before he turned the case over to the jury he asked the janitor who else had recently called to see the apartment.

"Several parties during the past week," replied Taylor. "There was a man and his wife from Detroit, and a lady from New Jersey, and a New York man who wanted an apartment for some friends, and another New York man, and then the lady who came to-day."

"Do you know the names of these people? They ought to be looked up."

"Not all of them, sir. Sometimes parties just come in and look, and don't give their names. And then sometimes they do."

"We have no evidence against any of these," said Mr. Hills; "so we cannot consider them here and now. If no one has any further information to give, we will await the jury's verdict."

The verdict was simply to the effect that Miss Curwood had met her death at the hands of some unknown person or persons. They recommended that the janitor, Taylor, be kept under a general surveillance, but could not say they suspected him of the crime.

It seemed to Mr. Britton that the gentlemen of the jury desired only to be freed from their responsibility in the matter, and had adopted the line of least resistance. But of course there was little to be learned from the evidence that had been given, and so there was no reason to feel in any way dissatisfied with their verdict. Investigation must be made later, and just now other matters must be considered.

The jurymen returned to their homes, the janitor and the hall-boy were dismissed, and it remained for Mr. Britton and Mr. Stuart to give directions for the removal of the body.

Mrs. Dellenbaugh, who had stayed through all the proceedings, seemed loath to leave, even now. She went up to Mr. Britton and spoke confidentially. "Was Mr. Stuart engaged to her?" she said.

"Yes," was the reply, spoken rather coolly, for the Lawyer thought the woman intrusive.

"I thought so. Now, see here: you send that young man home. He's just about ready to collapse, and I don't wonder. I'll stay here with you, and see that everything is done as it should be. I can tell you, that poor girl's mother and sister will be glad to know that there was some woman here to look after things."

She was intrusive, there was no doubt of that; but Mr. Britton began to think that her intrusion was prompted by a kind heart and womanly instinct. And Edwin Stuart did seem to be on the verge of collapse. Convulsive shudders went over him now and then, and his fingers were rigidly intertwined, as he stood gazing out of a window, seemingly unable to look in the direction of Isabel.

"Thank you, Mrs. Dellenbaugh," said Mr. Britton, after a moment's hesitation. "Your suggestion is a good one, and you are right in thinking the Curwood ladies will appreciate your thoughtfulness."

Though Stuart demurred at first, he was easily persuaded to leave the scene that was such torture to him, and, leaving the house, he went straight up to the Ponsonby.

Mr. Britton had realized that Mrs. Dellenbaugh was a woman of strong nerve and practical common-sense, but he was not prepared for the way in which she suddenly seemed to take the whole affair in charge.

"Of course," she said, with a decided air, "the poor girl must be taken to Bellevue. And then, I suppose, they'll have her taken to

that Funeral Church. Such a convenience for people who live in apartments! Now, you know, Mr. Britton, you must take care of her little belongings. No sense in letting this bag and her jewelry stay on her."

As she spoke, Mrs. Dellenbaugh removed a small brooch from the lace at the girl's throat, and was about to draw the rings from her hands.

"Oh, wait, wait!" cried Mr. Britton, to whom the act savored of desecration, or at least of undue haste.

"Just as you say," returned the officious woman, pausing; "but if she were my kin, I should n't want these valuable jewels left on her. Would you?"

"No, no," said the bewildered man; "no, I suppose you're right. Give them to me, then, and I will take them to her mother."

"Yes, do; it's much more sensible;" and in a few moments the few simple but valuable pieces of jewelry that Miss Curwood had worn were safely deposited in the hand-bag.

"There;" and Mrs. Dellenbaugh snapped the clasp of the bag and handed it to Mr. Britton. "Look out for that; it's pretty valuable."

Coroner Hills looked slightly astonished at this strange woman's bustling activity, but he was more accustomed to the surprises of strange femininity than the conservative Lawyer; and since the verdict of his jury, he had no further authority over the personal belongings of Isabel Curwood.

When at last it was all over, the Coroner had gone, and all that was mortal of the beautiful Isabel had been taken away, Mrs. Dellenbaugh gave her card to Mr. Britton and bade him good-by.

"You probably think me a queer woman," she said, "and I suppose I am. I don't mind confessing that I have what they call the detective instinct. This is one reason why I stayed through all that inquest business, even after the Coroner told me I might go home; and another reason was because I did n't want to leave that poor dear girl without a woman near her. I'm sure that young Mr. Stuart felt better to have me there, and I know the girl's people will be glad. So I make no apologies. And another thing, Mr. Britton: if you put a detective on this case, and I hope to goodness you will, remember that I'll be glad to help if I can in any way. I suppose a real detective would laugh at the idea of a woman being of any use, but I just guess a woman's intuition is often quite as dependable as a man's superior judgment."

"You don't mean, Mrs. Dellenbaugh, that you have a suspicion as to the criminal in this case?"

"No; I have not—that is, nothing that could be called a suspicion. But I do think that stupid Coroner might have asked more intelligent questions than he did."

"Then, if not suspicions, you have at least some intuitions in the matter. I can assure you, Mrs. Dellenbaugh, that if in future investigation, we feel that you could help us, we shall indeed ask you to do so. Do you go uptown? May I call a cab for you?"

"Thank you, Mr. Britton; the hall porter will look after me. Good-night."

"Good-night," returned the Lawyer, and in another moment he too was on his way to the Ponsonby.

CHAPTER VI.

DETECTIVE KLEIN

"It's bad enough," wailed Mrs. Curwood, "to lose our darling Isabel in this tragic way; but now to bring in a detective and such dreadful people makes it seem even worse."

"I think so, too," said young Stuart, raising a haggard face from his supporting hands. "I'd almost rather let the crime go unavenged, than to have the terrible publicity that it will make to have detectives on the case."

"I don't feel that way about it a bit," declared Grace. "Whoever was inhuman enough to kill that beautiful girl deserves all the punishment we can possibly bring to him. And as the only way to discover who the villain could have been is to have detectives, then I say we can't get them too quick."

It was the morning after the dreadful discovery had been made, and the people most interested were gathered in the Curwoods' apartment.

Mr. Britton, the Lawyer; Mr. Weatherby, as Isabel's guardian; and Edwin Stuart, as the girl's fiancé, shared with Mrs. Curwood and Grace the sorrow and mystery of the tragedy. It had been decided that it was necessary to engage the services of a detective, and a man from the Central Office had already been sent for. Mrs. Curwood was greatly opposed to this measure, and the three men were willing to defer to her wishes, so had it not been for Grace's insistence, Detective Klein would not have been called in.

"You must know, my dear Grace," Mr. Britton said, "that when a murder is committed without eye-witnesses, it is almost impossible to trace the criminal. Even supposing it had been that janitor at the Hammersmith, it could never be proved against him, as nobody could testify to seeing the deed."

"But," said Grace, "are n't murders usually committed without eye-witnesses? I don't suppose criminals act when other people are looking on. And yet they are caught and convicted."

"That is true," said Mr. Britton thoughtfully; "but they are

usually caught because they have left some evidence or clue behind them; and in this case there is none."

"I have heard it said," observed Mr. Weatherby, "that no one can go into a room and out again, without leaving some trace of his presence."

"That's all very well, theoretically," said Stuart, who still sat with his head bowed in his hands; "but, as we know, he left no tangible evidence. Except those matches, and they led to nothing."

"No, I can't believe that janitor did it," said Mr. Britton. "He could have no possible motive."

"But who could?" cried Grace. "Why should Isabel go into that vacant apartment, any way? You and she were n't looking for apartments, were you, Ed?"

Stuart looked up, his face drawn with emotion at this rather cold-hearted reference to his lost happiness. "No, indeed," he said; "we had n't gone as far as that; and, any way, I could n't afford a place like the Hammersmith."

When Mr. Klein came, Grace was apparently the only one who really welcomed his appearance. A detective, perhaps, should not be judged by his dress or manner, but they all felt that the man was of a less refined class than themselves, and they felt averse to his association with the tragedy of the beautiful Isabel.

But Grace was rather pleased than otherwise with the business-like way in which the detective commenced his work.

"You see," he said, after a number of preliminary questions, the answers to which he jotted down in a little book—"you see, when we take up a mysterious case like this, we look first for evidence, clues, and motive. Now, as near as I can make out, there is just about no evidence at all; no eye-witnesses, that is."

This remark, which corroborated Mr. Britton's recently expressed opinion, seemed to please that gentleman, and he nodded acquiescently.

"Then, again, as to clues," went on Klein, "there don't seem to be any so far."

"Except the burnt matches," suggested Mr. Weatherby.

"I have n't seen those, sir, but I should like to. I'll telephone Hills to send them over. We must go about this thing intelligently. Now, as to motive."

"But there can't be any motive!" cried Grace. "Nobody would want to kill Isabel. It must have been an accident."

"No, miss, it was no accident. Motives for killing people are always money, love, or revenge. Now, there was no robbery, was there?"

"No," replied Grace, who was the spokeswoman of the occasion; "her jewelry was untouched and her money was still in her purse. About twenty dollars."

"Twenty dollars!" exclaimed Stuart and Mr. Weatherby in the same breath. Had they tried to speak in concert, they could not have said the words with more perfect unity of speech and inflection.

Grace looked at them, amazed. "Yes, twenty dollars," she repeated; "that is, in bills; and some change, besides. Why does that surprise you?"

"I—I thought she usually carried more than that with her," said Stuart, stumbling a little in his speech, but Mr. Weatherby said:

"That was quite enough, I'm sure, unless she were going shopping. She ought not to have been out alone, any way. Isabel was too young and beautiful a girl to go about the city alone."

"But she was n't alone," said Mrs. Curwood. "I never let her go out alone. That is, she did start alone, but she only went down to meet Ed for luncheon. And then she was in his care."

"I know it," said Stuart sorrowfully; "and I did n't want to leave her at her dressmaker's; but she said she would be there most of the afternoon, and then she would take a cab home."

As the young man spoke, he was conscious that at least two pairs of eyes were regarding him intently. Leonard Weatherby's piercing gaze was fixed upon his face, and Klein's frank stare was equally inquisitive. Moreover, it was plain to be seen that these two men doubted his statements. This made him rather emphatic, and he repeated: "I did leave her there. I know that Frenchwoman said Isabel had n't been there, but I don't believe it. I left her at the door, and I'm sure she went in."

"Did you see her go in?" asked Klein sharply. "Did you see her enter the door?"

"No; I bade her good-by, and she paused a moment to look at a gown in the window, and I turned and went down-town."

"Then you don't know that she went in."

"Why, no, I suppose I don't. I know she fully intended to do so, but I suppose some friend or acquaintance might have come along then, and Isabel might have changed her mind."

"What difference does it make, any way?" exclaimed Grace impatiently. "If Ed left her there, and did n't see her again, that's all he knows about it. Now, Mr. Klein, how are you going to find out where she went next?"

"I don't know quite yet, Miss Curwood, but we must endeavor to trace her movements after Mr. Stuart left her. Where did you go yourself, Mr. Stuart?"

"I went down-town. I had an engagement."

"Where?"

"As it has no bearing on the case, and as I am not in the witness-box, I decline to say."

Klein looked at the young man in a friendly manner. "It would be better, Mr. Stuart, for you to tell exactly where you were all Tuesday afternoon."

"But I don't wish to do so, and I see no necessity for it. As to being better for me, I will be my own judge of that."

Mr. Klein turned again to Grace, as she was a far more sympathetic listener than the men. "I regret Mr. Stuart's attitude in this matter, but we must try to discover where your sister went after he left her. You could gather nothing from the contents of her bag, perhaps? No addresses, no memoranda, that would give a hint?"

"No," replied Grace; "I looked over all the things carefully, but there is nothing like that."

"Then we have two blank hours to fill in, between the time Mr. Stuart left her at three o'clock until the tragedy occurred at five."

"Why do you say five?" asked Grace. "How do you know that was the time?"

"In the few notes I made, when I first came in, one of these gentlemen told me that as Miss Curwood's watch stopped at 5.10, they supposed that was the hour of her death."

"Oh, that watch!" said Grace. "That had n't been going for weeks. It's one of those little toy watches set in the side of her bag. She never wound it up, I know."

"Then that destroys one of the very few bits of evidence we had," commented Mr. Britton. "Why did n't you tell of this before, Grace?"

"It's the first I've heard anything about the watch being in evidence. The crystal is broken, but I know positively the watch has n't been going for a long time."

Mr. Weatherby looked thoughtful, Mr. Stuart looked perplexed, and Mr. Britton looked as if he thought the mystery deeper than ever. "Then we don't know at what time the deed was committed," he said. "The Coroner seemed rather to think it was at a later hour, but he decided on five on account of the stopped watch."

"I should think," said Grace sharply, "that if detectives were detecting by means of a watch, they would find out whether it had been stopped or was run down!"

"I should think so, too," said Mr. Weatherby. "Grace, you must have a detective instinct yourself, like that strange little woman who was at the inquest."

"Don't class me with her! She was a prying, inquisitive, intrusive old thing! I don't want any of her assistance, I can tell you."

"No," agreed Mr. Weatherby. "I did n't see her myself, either, but from what the others say of her, I judge we have no reason to accept her further services."

"Come, come, now," said Mr. Britton; "be fair to her. She was

kind-hearted, and, though officious, she seemed level-headed and capable."

"Well, we have enough level heads right here," declared Grace, "and, with Mr. Klein's capability, we're going to take care of this matter ourselves."

Mr. Klein seemed lost in thought for a few moments, and then he said, "Since the watch is unreliable evidence, and since Mr. Hills thought the hour of the crime later in the evening, may it not have been done during that hour when the electric lights went out in this section of the city?"

This suggestion seemed to startle everybody. Mr. Britton struck the table with his fist, exclaiming, "Of course it was! That would explain many things!"

Mr. Weatherby nodded excitedly in agreement with this, and young Stuart wrung his hands. "Don't!" he cried. "I can't bear to think of it! Isabel alone in that darkness, and——"

The awful thought was too much for Mrs. Curwood also, and she rose unsteadily and with dazed, blinded movements left the room.

But Grace was greatly excited by the thoughts that poured in upon this suggestion. "Of course that was it!" she cried. "Isabel went somewhere after Ed left her, and then she started to come home alone, in a taxi probably, and then the lights went out, and, oh——"

She herself was unable to complete the picture she had conjured up.

The three men, too, were aroused now. Director Klein had certainly made a suggestion which was probably a discovery.

"Then you see," he went on, "that would account for the matches."

"But they are accounted for," said Mr. Weatherby.

"They're said to be, but the janitor's story may be true and may not. I sent for those matches, and I can't help hoping they will tell us something. Now, tell me again of the telephone message that said Miss Curwood was taking tea somewhere."

"That was said to be from me," said Ed Stuart gloomily, "but I did n't telephone. It must have been some one else who used my name."

"Would n't the housemaid who received the message know your voice?" asked Mr. Weatherby quietly.

"I don't know," said Stuart sullenly, "and I don't care. I did n't telephone, and I did n't take Isabel to tea, and that's all there is about it."

"But as the case is serious," said Klein, looking very steadily at the young man, "you will have to give us more than your unsupported word. Let me urge you to tell where you were that afternoon."

"I decline to do that," said Stuart, not rudely, but with a dogged air of determination.

"Let us all tell where we were during that dark hour," said Mr.

Weatherby. "Our stories can easily be corroborated, should it become necessary. For my part, I was caught in the street on my way home. The lights went out suddenly, as you know, and I was groping in perfect darkness. I turned and went down-town until I was below the affected district. Then I dined at a restaurant, and afterward went up to the Plymouth Club. Of course by this time the lights were on again, as it was about eight o'clock, but many of the men at the Club recounted humorous experiences they had been through. Most unusual thing to happen; caused by a short circuit, I believe. And you know, not only the lights went out, but the electric cars could n't run."

"Nor the electric elevators," said Grace. "As for us, Mother and I were dressing for dinner. We were n't much bothered, except that we had to get along by candle-light. The elevator was working again by the time we were ready to go downstairs."

"I did n't have any remarkable experience," said Mr. Britton. "During the dark hour, I was at home, and we managed very well with lamps. Where were you, Stuart?"

"Now, look here," said the young man: "I've told you I refused to be questioned about Tuesday afternoon. My whereabouts and my doings have no relation whatever to this dreadful affair. I left Isabel at three o'clock; I never saw her again until I saw her dead. Until you tell me definitely that you accuse me of the crime, you have no reason or right to ask me personal questions."

Grace looked at him in horror. She did n't really think that Ed had anything to do with Isabel's death, but it seemed incredible that he would take and hold an attitude that laid him open to suspicion.

Mr. Weatherby looked distressed and seemed about to speak on the subject, and then apparently thought better of it, for he said nothing.

Mr. Britton, however, seemed to think there was no reason why Stuart should answer questions, and he said to the detective, "I think we must work from known facts, rather than vague suspicions. I'm convinced now that Miss Curwood met her death during that dark hour, between seven and eight on Tuesday evening. I think she was abducted, or by some scheme lured to that vacant apartment, and there brutally killed. But further than that my mind cannot go. Since the motive was not robbery, I cannot even imagine who could have taken her there, or for what purpose. It must have been some one whom she knew, for certainly she never would have gone with a stranger."

"Unless she had been first rendered unconscious," suggested Klein.

"Yes, or unless she were dead before she was taken there," said Mr. Weatherby. "These suggestions seem very dreadful, I know; but as we are all so very much in the dark, we must consider every possibility, however remote."

A messenger came and brought to Klein an envelope from Coroner Hills. It proved that this contained the burnt matches which had been picked up at the Hammersmith.

Klein opened the packet eagerly, for he had the detective's liking for material clues. He tipped up the envelope and let the matches all fall out on the table.

"Fine work!" he said sarcastically. "Fine detective work, I must say!"

"What do you mean?" asked Mr. Weatherby, looking at the matches with some curiosity, for, not having been at the inquest, he had not seen them before.

As for Grace, she was fascinated. She gazed at the tiny sticks, as if she hoped to read from them the whole story.

"Look at there!" exclaimed Klein. "There's the red matches that they proved belonged to the janitor—five or six of 'em. But nobody said anything about these two little yellow ones. That may tell another story!"

There was no lack of interest now among his auditors. The heads of all were bent over the matches on the table, and all listened attentively as Klein went on: "These two yellow matches have been lighted, you see, but not burned very far. That shows they were blown out almost at once."

"Well?" said Mr. Britton. "Is that so very important?"

"No, sir, not that, but the matches themselves are important. See, they're made of paper and stamped with a name. They were n't even burned down far enough to burn the name. See, it's *Riga*."

"Riga?" said Grace wonderingly. "What does that mean?"

"May be the name of a cigar," replied Klein, "and may be something else. Matches are used to advertise 'most anything nowadays. Then, again, it may be a hotel or a club. But whatever it is, it's a clue to be followed up, a definite, tangible clue, and I'm glad we've got it!"

"I don't believe it's a cigar," said Mr. Britton meditatively. "It sounds to me more like a hotel."

"Riga's a place in Russia," said Grace. "A city, is n't it?"

Edwin Stuart looked up with a sudden start. "Russia!" he exclaimed. "You've hit it, Grace! Look for that precious Russian Count of yours! Where was he during the dark hour? Where has he been since? Has he been here?"

"No," said Grace, her face turning very white; "I expected to see him at Mrs. Merwin's dinner, Tuesday night, but he was n't there."

"At dinner, Tuesday night! At that dinner that took place just after the dark hour! And he was n't there? Of course he was n't there! Look up that Russian impostor, Mr. Klein; that man who

calls himself a count! Devote your energies to finding out where he was Tuesday afternoon and evening, and then you need n't be so interested in my occupation at that time!"

"Gently, gently, Stuart," said Mr. Britton. "Don't be so hasty. We have no reason as yet to suspect Count Kovroff of anything wrong."

"Nor have you reason to suspect me!" exclaimed Stuart bitterly, and, rushing from the room, he left the apartment, and, calling the elevator, went down and left the house.

CHAPTER VII.

COUNT KOVROFF

It was Thursday evening and once again a little group was gathered in the Curwoods' drawing-room.

The funeral, that afternoon, had been private, for, owing to the tragic circumstances, Mrs. Curwood would not have it otherwise. But instead of being nervously prostrated, and going at once to her own room, Mrs. Curwood seemed buoyed up by a quivering excitement, caused of course by a sort of reaction after her awful experiences.

Mr. Britton was not present, but Ed Stuart and Mr. Weatherby had escorted the ladies home, and had stayed to dine with them.

"You can all say whatever you like," exclaimed Grace, "but I know Count Kovroff had nothing to do with Isabel's death."

"And I know he did," declared Stuart, with a tone of equally positive conviction.

"How can you know it?" demanded Grace.

"In just the same way that you get your information of his innocence. My intuition tells me."

"But my intuition has better grounds than yours."

"Pardon me; I think the opposite."

"Children," said Mrs. Curwood, "don't quarrel. I can't believe that delightful Count could do anything wrong; but if he did, the detective will find out all about it. Mr. Weatherby, who is Isabel's heir?"

If Leonard Weatherby was shocked at Mrs. Curwood's sudden and cold-blooded question, he expressed no surprise at it.

"You know," he began, "Isabel had just come of age."

"Yes, her birthday was three weeks ago," said Grace, "and she told me that she had asked you to put her money affairs in her own charge."

"She told me that, too," said Stuart, "and she said you were just about to do it."

"Quite right, quite right," said Weatherby, nodding his handsome head thoughtfully. "I was just about to hand Isabel's fortune over

to her. She had a good business mind, very good; and I've no doubt she could have taken charge of her finances admirably. Poor girl, that's all over now. If she left no will—and I suppose she did n't, unless perhaps some informal memorandum among her own papers—you, Mrs. Curwood, are her heir. But of course there is much to be gone through with in the matter: Surrogate's Court, administration papers, and all that sort of thing, of which you ladies have no knowledge. I will attend to it all—glad to be of any service I can. But I fear it will surprise you, Mrs. Curwood, when you learn how small Isabel's fortune is."

"Why, I thought her quite rich!" declared Grace. "You gave her lots of interest money."

"Ah, perhaps I was foolishly fond. I fear I let the girl think herself more well-to-do than she was, because I could n't bear to refuse her anything. She has overspent her interest for years, which has made quite a shrinkage of her principal. Moreover, some investments which I supposed to be absolutely gilt-edged have turned out badly. Nobody's fault—nobody's fault, I assure you. Merely the ups and down of Wall Street. But you may leave it to me, to realize every cent possible and turn it over to you, Mrs. Curwood. Though, of course, this will take some time."

"Longer than it would have taken to hand over the fortune to Isabel herself?" asked Grace.

"Yes, somewhat longer. My dear girl, you know nothing of the delays of legal business. But leave all that to me. You have enough heart trouble without dipping into any financial worries. But there's one thing I have discovered to-day, that seems to me unaccountable. I sent to the bank, of course, for Isabel's bank-book, and I find that she drew out a thousand dollars the very day she died."

"A thousand dollars!" exclaimed Grace. "Why, I looked into her purse when it was sent home, and it contained only about twenty dollars. And I'm sure she did n't buy anything that day. Did she while she was with you, Ed?"

Young Stuart's face was white, but positive and calm. "No," he said; "she bought nothing while I was with her. But, as I have repeatedly told you, I left her at the dressmaker's door, and in there she may easily have spent that amount."

"Oh, no," cried Mrs. Curwood; "she would not pay for anything there, for we have a charge account. And besides, Madame Laurestine says she did not come in there at all."

Stuart said no more, but shut his lips with the dogged expression he always assumed when they spoke of Isabel's visit to the dressmaker.

"But she must have done something with the money," went on Mr. Weatherby. "Had she any large bills to pay?"

"No," said Grace; "and, any way, she always paid her large bills with checks. I can't see why she would have drawn so much."

"That is not so surprising," said Mr. Weatherby. "Isabel often drew large sums. But the question is, what became of the money?"

"What could have become of it?" cried Grace. "Oh, perhaps Isabel was robbed by some dreadful highway robber. That missing money ought to be a clue."

"Oh, I don't know about that," said Mr. Weatherby. "I can't help thinking that Isabel's death was due to some dreadful accident. Surely no one meant to kill her!"

"How you talk!" exclaimed Stuart contemptuously. "Of course the poor girl was killed, and you'll yet find that that miserable Count is at the bottom of it. If money is missing, all the more reason why you should look for him. Where is he, anyhow?"

"So far, Klein has n't been able to locate him," said Mr. Weatherby. "But I don't suspect the Count. I believe that if we did know the criminal, he would prove to be some one we've never heard of before; some robber or experienced thief, who robbed and murdered the poor girl for that thousand dollars she had in her purse."

"Perhaps you're right," said Stuart brokenly; and then he buried his face in his hands and gave himself up to his harrowing thoughts.

Detective Klein, who had promised to report that evening, came up to the apartment with a disappointed expression of face.

"I can't find him," he declared, sitting down on the edge of one of Mrs. Curwood's brocaded chairs. "I can't spot him anywhere. They say he's gone to Atlantic City, and they even gave me the name of his hotel there, but when I wired down there they said he'd gone, and they did n't know where. But I think he's the man we're after, and I won't let up until I find him."

"Look here, Mr. Klein," said Grace, "you think Count Kovroff is implicated in my sister's death, just because you can't think of anybody else to suspect. Now, is n't that so?"

"Well, yes, miss, in a way," stammered the detective, somewhat taken aback by this sudden accusation; "that—and then that 'Riga' on the matches."

"Pooh! Just because Riga chances to be a Russian name. That's no sort of evidence at all. Just you wait till you hear about the money missing from Isabel's purse, and then I guess you'll change the direction of your search. Count Kovroff was n't so destitute that he would commit crime for the sake of a paltry thousand dollars!"

"A thousand dollars taken from her purse! Why have n't I been told of this?"

"I have n't heard of it, either," said Lawyer Britton, who had entered the room, unannounced. "What's this about robbery?"

"I discovered to-day," said Mr. Weatherby, "that Isabel had drawn one thousand dollars from the bank on Tuesday. It is possible that she was robbed, as we can find no trace of the money."

"This seems to me decidedly important," said Mr. Britton; "I should think it might prove a clue to the murderer."

"Oh, hardly that," said Stuart; "you see, we don't know yet whether Isabel did any shopping on Tuesday afternoon."

"She could n't have done so," declared Grace; "for whatever she had bought would have been sent home by this time."

"A big box came this morning," said Mrs. Curwood, who had now become quieter and rather apathetic.

"I know," said Grace, as the tears rushed to her eyes. "It contained Isabel's clothes that she wore away that day. Her tailored suit and that old gray boa. I hate that boa; it's so old it sheds fluff over everything."

"So it does," said Stuart reminiscently. "I remember I spoke about it while we were lunching. The bits of feather flew all over."

"Tell me more about this missing money," said Mr. Klein, who, still perched awkwardly on the edge of his chair, was making ostentatious notes in a little book.

"There's nothing more to tell," said Mr. Weatherby shortly. "Miss Curwood drew a thousand dollars from her bank the day on which she—she disappeared; and we have had no knowledge of the money since. But she may have used it in many different ways, word of which will come to us later. We don't know that it has anything to do with her death."

"Looks to me like that Count," muttered Mr. Klein. "Mighty queer he disappeared the very same day."

"Especially as he was expected to be at a dinner to which Isabel was also invited," said Stuart.

"That so?" asked Klein alertly. "Was n't he there?"

"No," said Grace, as if the question had been put directly to her.

"What was his excuse?" demanded the detective.

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Grace, a little haughtily. "Perhaps the hostess, Mrs. Merwin, could tell you. But if Count Kovroff was with my sister Tuesday afternoon, then something happened to him, too, and he is also a victim, for I know he is not a criminal."

"You're drawing on your imagination, Grace," said Mr. Britton, looking kindly at the girl. "You know you really know very little about this Russian. May it not have been he who telephoned in Mr. Stuart's name, Tuesday afternoon?"

"Of course it was!" cried Stuart. "The villain telephoned in my name, and then went off himself with Isabel and stole her money, and—and——"

"There, there, Stuart," advised Mr. Britton, "there's no use in making such statements, when you have no foundation of facts for them."

"The man's disappearance is a fact, is n't it? If a man has done nothing wrong, why does he drop out of existence like that, and leave no word where he may be found. A man who will hide himself has some reason for hiding!"

"He is n't hiding!" exclaimed Grace angrily. "You talk foolishly, Ed; and it's only your prejudice against the man, that makes you so vindictive. Count Kovroff is as innocent as any man in this room!"

It was perhaps the result of Grace's emphatic inflection, but it sounded almost like an accusation, and, with the exception of Klein, every man in the room turned white and looked startled enough to have been the criminal himself.

Klein looked curiously from one to another, and wondered if, after all, young Stuart could have robbed and murdered the girl he was engaged to. It seemed incredible, and yet in his investigations Klein had learned a few things about Stuart not altogether to his credit. As he was vaguely conjecturing these matters a messenger came and brought a telegram for Grace.

She tore it open, and as she read her face changed. "Listen to this!" she exclaimed. "It is from Count Kovroff, at Atlantic City. I will read it:

"Have just learned heart-breaking news. Will be with you at once. All my love and sympathy.

"KOVROFF.

"Now, if you think the man who could send that telegram is the man you are seeking, you're terribly mistaken, that's all."

"I agree with you, Grace," said Mr. Britton. "The tone of that message is too sincere not to be honest. I think, Mr. Klein, you will have to turn your investigations in another direction."

"I don't!" exclaimed Stuart. "The more clever the criminal, the more he will be able to write or send misleading messages. He telephoned a false message in my name, now he is telegraphing one equally false, over his own signature. I will not say 'over his own name,' for I don't believe it is his."

Stuart had worked himself up into such a frenzy of passion, that his words were really unheeded by the others. Most of them knew Stuart well enough not to attempt to argue with him when he was angry.

"I think I'll go now," said the detective, "and I'll come up here again if I have anything to report. You can let me know, Miss Curwood, if you want me at any time."

"Yes," said Grace shortly, with an inflection that sounded as if she did not care if she never saw him again.

Soon after, the other men also took their leave, feeling sure the ladies wished to rest after the trying day.

Mrs. Curwood went at once to her room, but Grace dawdled about the drawing room, rereading the telegram and wondering if by any chance the Count would arrive that evening.

As the telegram had been delayed, the Count did arrive soon after it, and as it was not yet very late, he ventured to call at the Curwoods'.

Grace received him, but Mrs. Curwood sent word that she was feeling really ill and could not see any more guests that night.

The Russian came forward to meet Grace, with both hands extended, and his dark eyes full of a sorrowful sympathy that went straight to Grace's heart.

"Oh, I'm so glad you've come!" she cried, giving him her hands.

"My little girl," said Kovroff very gently, as he led her to a sofa, "don't try to tell me about it; don't wound your dear heart still further by repeating it. I know most of the details, and the rest I shall learn from some one else. Just sit quietly, and let me tell you of my deep sympathy and then learn what I can do to aid you."

"You've aided me already," said Grace, "just by your coming here. Do you know they are saying dreadful things about you?"

"About me! In connection with this affair? Miss Curwood—Grace—you don't mean that they consider me—implicated!"

"Yes, just that! And I thought I'd rather tell you right out, than have you learn it from some one else."

"How thoughtful of you! But what do they say? I have n't seen to-night's papers."

"Oh, they say that you disappeared. Why were n't you at Mrs. Merwin's dinner?"

"I was called suddenly to Atlantic City on a rather important matter. I went to see Mrs. Merwin myself about it before I left. I made it all right with her."

"I felt sure you did. And did you go away on Tuesday?"

"Yes; Tuesday afternoon."

"Then you can prove what they call an alibi, can't you?"

"Nonsense, child! Don't talk of alibis. That implies that one is suspected of crime."

"You are," whispered Grace softly, as she turned and looked directly into the dark eyes that sombrely regarded her.

"Suspected of crime? I hate to have you do it, but I think I must ask you to tell me just how matters stand."

The Count's voice was very gentle, and the whole effect of his presence was soothing to Grace's wornout nerves. A native of Russia,

he seemed to have inherited only the desirable qualities of his race, and those less admirable seemed to be absent from his appearance and character. Though his hair and eyes were intensely black, his complexion was of a clear, fine pallor, while his features were finely shaped and plainly indicated a patrician lineage.

His manners were gentle and refined, and he spoke English perfectly, with the merest suggestion of a foreign accent.

"Shall I tell you everything?" asked Grace, completely won by his gentle demeanor and influenced by his quiet air of decision.

"Yes, everything," he answered, with a little smile that seemed to imply great confidence between the two.

"Well, then, they say you're not a real count."

"But I am; so that amounts to nothing. What next?"

"They say you have no money."

"But I have; so that too is as if unsaid. And then?"

"They say that since you were not at Mrs. Merwin's dinner, you went away somewhere with Isabel, and telephoned up here saying Mr. Stuart had taken her to tea; and then you took her away, and stole her money, and—and——"

"There, there, my dear child, don't tell me any more. To think that you should have had to listen to it! But I thank you for telling me, and I am glad that fate willed that I should learn it from you rather than from harsher lips. Now you have told me what I have to refute, I shall do it, and I can do it with no trouble whatever, Grace—I may call you Grace, may I not? We seem so brought together by this sorrow."

"Yes, I am glad to have you call me Grace, for I know how you cared for our Isabel."

"I did," said Kovroff, looking away from the girl; "though not just in the way I care for you. But this is what I want to say: we *must* find the man who murdered your sister. We *must* find him. I cannot sit tamely by and see that crime go unavenged. As for this absurd suspicion of myself, I can soon set that straight. I dare say, Grace, I have been too reticent about my own affairs, but I had a foolish desire to be accepted by people on my merits rather than on my credentials. But rest assured that I shall leave no stone unturned in my search for this villain, and I shall engage a detective myself, as I wish to work untrammelled. Have you any suspicion who could have done it?"

"No; but I can't bear to think it was Ed Stuart."

"I'm almost sure it was not he."

"Only almost?"

"Only almost now; but I hope soon to be certain of his innocence. You see, I've not yet recovered from the shock and the surprise and

horror of it. But I know also that if detective work is to be done, it is best to put the machinery in operation just as soon as possible."

"Yes, I know that, too. And are you really going to get a detective of your own?"

"I really am. This is a very serious matter, and though I have grave fears as to where investigation may lead us, yet justice must be done, if possible. Now, my little Grace, I'm going away. And you must go to rest, for I fear you have hard days ahead of you. But remember that I am here to help you, and that I shall spare no effort or energy to do whatever can be done."

Grace looked at him wonderingly as they said good-night. "Are you so good to me," she asked, "because you were so fond of Isabel?"

"Partly for that reason," he replied, "and partly for others."

CHAPTER VIII.

DETECTIVE BOSTWICK

It was nearly noon the next day when Count Kovroff came again to the Curwoods' apartment. He brought with him a Mr. Bostwick, whom he introduced as a private detective from the Packerton Agency.

Mrs. Curwood received the Count with cordial greetings, but as she had an inherent dislike of detectives, she somewhat curtly acknowledged the presence of Mr. Bostwick.

But not so Grace. Partly because she hoped the new man would solve the mystery, and partly because he was brought to her by the Count, Grace heartily expressed her gladness to see him.

Mr. Weatherby was also present. He greeted Count Kovroff in a non-committal manner, voicing the platitudes which men use when they have no interest in one another. But Mr. Weatherby looked curiously at the detective. He seemed to be wondering whether a new man in the field would help or would only further complicate the tangle.

Henry Bostwick himself was a sharp-featured, intelligent-looking man, with alert manners and a general business-like air. He seemed inclined to go directly to the point, and as soon as the introductions were over, he drew a note-book from his pocket, and said that he would like to ask a few questions.

"Wait a moment," said Count Kovroff, in his quiet way. "First we want to report to Mrs. Curwood what we have already done."

"Oh, don't report to me!" exclaimed Mrs. Curwood, looking distressed. "I can't stand any more of this dreadful detective work. It cannot bring my darling child back, and I should rather never know who did the awful deed, than be harrowed further by these terrible investigations. But if it must be done, make your reports to my lawyer, Mr. Britton."

"I think it must be done, Mrs. Curwood," the Count said very gently, "and as it is important that we lose no time, we do not wish to wait for an opportunity to consult Mr. Britton."

"Then consult Mr. Weatherby," cried the distracted lady, "for I cannot stand any more of it." With a nervous shudder, Mrs. Curwood rose from her chair and left the room.

"I quite appreciate Mrs. Curwood's feelings," said Mr. Weatherby. "I, too, fear we can never discover the murderer, and if we did, as Mrs. Curwood so truly says, it would not bring Isabel back to us."

"But that principle," said the Count, "would mean that wrongdoing would never be avenged. I too appreciate Mrs. Curwood's feelings as a mother, and I cannot wonder at the position she takes. It is therefore for the men who are her friends to avenge this crime, if the criminal can be discovered."

"That's just the point," said Mr. Weatherby. "Of course we must make all efforts, but can the criminal be discovered? So far as I can see, there is absolutely no clue to his identity, and granting that, as we suppose, the dreadful deed was committed during that hour when the electric lights went out, how can it ever be learned who did it?"

"Though I cannot answer your question at once, Mr. Weatherby," said the detective, as if the inquiry had been made of him, "I may say that since the investigation of crime is my business, and since such investigation is frequently successful, there is certainly a strong probability of finding the man, even though we have so far no very definite clues."

"Very well," returned Mr. Weatherby. "I am sure I am ready to help in any way I can. But I must protest against having your reports made to me. I was Miss Curwood's guardian, and of course her financial affairs are in my charge until I turn them over to Mrs. Curwood; but aside from that, I have no responsibility in the matter, and could not think of assuming the position of director-general in this investigation. Mr. Britton is doubtless the one to whom your reports should be made."

"Not at all!" cried Grace. "Make your reports to me. As Isabel's sister, I'm sufficiently in authority, and though Mother is nervously broken down by this sorrow, I am not. Indeed, the dreadful way in which Isabel met her death spurs me to action and endeavor to avenge, rather than allowing me to give way to helpless grief."

"That is the right spirit," said Kovroff approvingly. "Your love for your sister is best shown by avenging her death. And to my mind, as a representative of your mother, you are the one to whom reports should be made, and I am sure your intelligent appreciation will aid us in our work."

Considering this matter settled, Mr. Bostwick proceeded to address himself mainly to Grace, though he glanced now and then at Mr. Weatherby for his sanction and approval.

"After Count Kovroff engaged me to work up this case," he began, "I went at once to the Coroner and learned from him all that has been discovered so far. I then went to interview Madame Laurestine, but she asserts positively that Miss Curwood did not visit her establishment at all on Tuesday afternoon. This is so thoroughly corroborated by her employees and attendants that it leaves no room for doubt. This would seem to argue a discrepancy between the modiste's statement and Mr. Stuart's assertion that he left Miss Curwood there at three o'clock. But both may be true, and Miss Curwood may have changed her mind suddenly after bidding Mr. Stuart good-by."

"Then I fail to see how your interview with the dressmaker has furthered your quest," remarked Count Kovroff, with a somewhat ironic intonation.

"Only negatively," replied Bostwick carelessly. After a brief glance at the Count, he went on talking to Grace. "Then I went to the bank, Miss Curwood's bank, and learned that she drew one thousand dollars in cash on Tuesday afternoon."

"Which fact I stated yesterday," interposed Mr. Weatherby.

"Yes; but you learned the bare fact from the pass-book. I personally interviewed the cashier, and he told me that when he paid this money to Miss Curwood, Mr. Stuart was with her."

This statement caused a decided sensation. If Ed Stuart had been at the bank with Isabel, and knew she had drawn a thousand dollars, why had he said nothing about it?

Grace looked startled. She remembered the rumors of Stuart's gambling, and was forced to admit to herself that here was something that required explanation. For Stuart had implied, in the heat of passion, that Count Kovroff had robbed Isabel of that money, and had also declared that he, Stuart, knew nothing of the money transaction until informed of it the day before.

Mr. Weatherby looked frankly amazed. "Stuart with her!" he exclaimed. "Did he take the money?"

"We do not know," said Count Kovroff gravely. "That is what our investigation must tell us. I think it also my duty to state that I know Mr. Stuart is in the habit of playing cards for high stakes, though he is far from being a rich man."

"He owes you money?" asked Mr. Bostwick.

"Yes; but that is aside from the point, save that it proves that Mr. Stuart plays for higher stakes than he can afford. But to my mind, the fact that Mr. Stuart went with Miss Curwood to the bank, and did not afterward volunteer that information, is not in any way an indica-

tion that he was at all concerned or implicated in the tragedy of her death."

"I quite agree with you," declared Mr. Weatherby. "I've known Ed Stuart many years; and though he does gamble, and though he is a spendthrift and improvident, yet he was thoroughly in love with Isabel, and I cannot believe he would have harmed a hair of her head."

"I'm working on that assumption," said the Count. "I think as you do, Mr. Weatherby, and I have not the slightest suspicion of Mr. Stuart."

"But he has of you," flung out Grace, almost involuntarily.

The Count smiled in his grave fashion. "If he has, it is only because of personal prejudice. Mr. Stuart does not like me, because I happen to know a good deal about him that he would rather not have known. As to his suspicions carrying any weight, they are so ill-founded that I can prove them false by a word. Moreover, and here is a vital point, if Mr. Stuart really suspects me, that proves him innocent. And granting this, we must turn our attention elsewhere."

Mr. Weatherby looked at the Russian with admiration. This was acute reasoning, and Leonard Weatherby always appreciated a clever intellect.

"And so," Mr. Bostwick resumed, "since we lose all knowledge of Miss Curwood at the modiste's, we must take up the trail where we next know of her presence; that is, the Hammersmith apartment house. It is my purpose to go there now and learn what I may, but before going I wished to report what I have already done. To sum up, I have learned that when Miss Curwood disappeared she probably had with her one thousand dollars, in ten one-hundred-dollar bills. As these ten bills were missing when she was found, it is not improbable that the theft of them constituted the motive for her murder. This may or may not be a true theory, but it is certainly worth following up."

"By all means," said Mr. Weatherby; "it is indeed important to know that the money was in such large bills. It is quite possible they may be traced."

"I think so," agreed Bostwick; "and as no time should be lost, I am going now to the Hammersmith. Will you go with me, Mr. Weatherby?"

"I think not, Mr. Bostwick. As I told you, I do not wish to assume definite responsibility in this matter. Moreover, I am quite sure I could be of no real assistance, as I have not a particle of detective ability. It is out of the question that Grace should go—I should be decidedly opposed to such a course. If you especially wish to have some one with you, why not——" He bowed in the direction of Count Kovroff.

"Oh, do go, Count," cried Grace; "you're just the one to go. You will, won't you?"

"Certainly I'll go, if Mr. Bostwick desires it;" and the Count's handsome face seemed to grow graver still, as if he apprehended future tragic disclosures.

Together, Count Kovroff and Mr. Bostwick went to the Hammer-smith. The detective took the initiative and asked first for a private interview with the superintendent of the house. This was granted, and in Mr. Emmons' office, Bostwick inquired concerning the character and habits of Taylor, the janitor.

"I have always found the fellow perfectly honest," said Mr. Emmons, "and I am thoroughly convinced that he had no hand in the murder of Miss Curwood, and knew nothing of it until he accidentally discovered the body. He has been with us for years, and has always been sober and honest. He is not perfect, and unless brought up with a round turn now and then, he is inclined to slight his work occasionally. But I am positively sure he is not vicious, and is in no way implicated in the Curwood tragedy."

"Quite aside from the murder, Mr. Emmons, you feel sure of Taylor's honesty?" asked Bostwick. "I mean, in money matters."

A look of doubt came to Mr. Emmons' face.

"A week ago I should unhesitatingly have answered yes to that question. But yesterday one of my hall-boys told me that Taylor was unusually rich all of a sudden. He said that he was out with Taylor for some kind of a jollification, which Taylor paid for with a hundred-dollar bill."

"A new one?" asked Bostwick, not showing in his face that the statement was of special interest.

"Yes, a new, crisp one, I was told; and though it may be all right, it is an unusual thing for a janitor to carry such large bills."

"It is unusual, Mr. Emmons," said the detective, "and it is important, as we have just learned that Miss Curwood had ten new hundred-dollar notes with her on Tuesday afternoon."

"You don't say so! That looks very bad for Taylor! Very bad indeed. Shall I send for him?"

"Yes; I think you may. It must be inquired into."

"Attack him discreetly," suggested Count Kovroff, as Mr. Emmons rang a bell. "Don't accuse him, but let him implicate himself."

Never before having seen either Count Kovroff or Mr. Bostwick, the janitor was not alarmed when summoned into their presence. He stood deferential and unconcerned, waiting to learn what might be required of him.

"You will answer any questions these gentlemen may ask you, Taylor," said Mr. Emmons, and the janitor acquiesced.

"I merely wish to inquire about a little business matter," said Bostwick, looking at Taylor with an abstracted, business-like air. "You save a little money, I suppose, out of your salary?"

"Yes, sir," said Taylor wondering whether this man were an insurance agent or a mine owner.

"And you lay it up in the bank or invest it?"

"I've never had enough to invest, sir. I just tuck it in the savings bank now and then."

"Ah, a very good plan. And then if you want some, you draw it out?"

"Well, yes, sir; but mostly I leaves it there. You see, what I put in I want to save."

"Yes, quite so. And not having drawn any lately, how does it happen that a few nights ago you paid a little account with a hundred-dollar bill?"

Perhaps Mr. Bostwick's method was not quite as discreet as Count Kovroff had advised, but there was no doubt of its efficacy. The sudden change that came over Taylor's face was equivalent to the amplest confession of guilt. He turned perfectly white, his lips twitched, and his eyes stared miserably.

"What do you mean?" he muttered hoarsely.

Mr. Bostwick pursued his advantage. "I mean that you have incriminated yourself by your own agitation at my question. Now, don't attempt to deny anything, but tell the exact truth. Where did you get that hundred-dollar bill that you paid out the other night?"

"What night?" The question was uttered with a struggling attempt at bravado.

"Never mind what night! Never mind where! You passed a hundred-dollar bill. Where did you get it?"

"I—I drew it from the bank."

"That is a lie! If you had, you would not be so upset over the matter. You did not draw it from your bank. It was a new, crisp bill, and you took it from—shall I tell you where?"

"No, oh, no!" and his voice was almost a shriek, as Taylor pressed his hands over his eyes.

"Ah, you want to shut out the memory of the dreadful scene! You want to forget how you strangled——"

"I did n't!" Taylor's hands came down from his eyes, and his drawn face showed a blazing indignation as he made his denial. "I did n't strangle her! How dare you say so? It is you who are lying! I did n't! I did n't!"

Count Kovroff laid his hand on the detective's arm. "I believe that fellow," he said; "he is speaking the truth. Whatever else he may have done, he did not murder Isabel Curwood."

"No, I did n't!" reiterated Taylor, and he gazed gratefully at the Count.

Again Bostwick was quick to seize his opportunity. "Then, Taylor," he said, "if you don't want to be arrested for murder, tell the truth about what you did. If you stole Miss Curwood's money, it is bad enough, but if you confess freely, it may save you from being suspected of something worse."

"Well, I found a hundred-dollar bill——" Taylor began, but the detective interrupted him:

"No, that won't do! We want the truth, I tell you! You did n't find a hundred-dollar bill. You stole ten hundred-dollar bills!"

"Ten hundred-dollar bills! A thousand dollars! Indeed and indeed I did n't!"

"My man," again broke in Count Kovroff, "again I believe you. You have a peculiarly tell-tale face, and somehow it indicates clearly when you are telling the truth and when you are not. Now, I believe that you did not steal one thousand dollars. How much did you steal?"

It may have been the suddenness of the question, or it may have been the impelling force of the Count's strong will, but the answer came instantly and it seemed involuntarily:

"Five hundred dollars."

"I don't believe it," said Mr. Bostwick. "Why should he take only half?"

"Wait a moment," said Kovroff; "I believe it, because the man's face verifies his statements. Now, Taylor, you have gone so far, you must make a clean breast of the whole matter; and not only you *must* do so, but it is altogether for your own interests to do so. So tell us the circumstances of the robbery."

"Or else be arrested for murder," calmly added Mr. Bostwick.

Probably persuaded by this last dreadful suggestion, Taylor spoke.

"Here's the way of it," he said: "I don't know anything about it—who killed the young lady, or how she got into this house—but I discovered the body Wednesday morning, when I went into that apartment to open the windows and air it."

"That was before Mrs. Dellenbaugh came," put in Mr. Emmons sternly.

"Yes, sir, it was; I'm confessing now." The man had a look of dogged determination, as if he saw that his game was up, and that the truth would win for him more leniency than evasion could. "It was about nine o'clock in the morning when I went in there, and I saw the beautiful young lady—stone dead. I could n't think for a minute, and I opened her little hand-bag to see if there was a card or letter telling who she was. I never thought of such a thing as robbery! But there was a roll of new bills right to my hand. I have never been

tempted like that before, and the temptation was too much for me. I took the roll of bills, and shut the bag again. Then I went out of the apartment, intending to report downstairs. But on the way down, somehow I got the horrors, and I could n't report it."

"The horrors were caused because of your own black work in the matter!" broke in Bostwick. "Robbing the dead is not much less a crime than murder itself!"

"But it is less," said the Count, who wished to keep Taylor calm until they had the whole story. "Go on and tell us what happened next."

"Nothing happened," said Taylor sullenly, "until the lady came to look at the apartment. And I took her up there, and she saw the dead body, and of course I made out I did n't know anything about it. And that's all."

CHAPTER IX.

SOME INQUIRIES

"No, it is n't all!" declared Bostwick. "You confessed to having taken five hundred dollars, but Miss Curwood had a thousand dollars in her purse. Where's the rest of it?"

"I don't know, sir. The roll I took I stuffed into my pocket, and when I looked at it afterward, I found it was five bills, a hundred dollars each. That's all there was in her purse, so far as I know; but there might have been more in an inside pocket or something."

"No, there was n't," said the Count; "except for some very small bills and silver. There are still five of those hundred-dollar notes to be accounted for. It is absurd to think whoever killed her would take half the money and put the other five hundred back."

"She may have spent it before she came here," suggested Bostwick.

"She may have done so, but not probably. If she had bought anything, as her sister said, it would have been sent home before this. No, if she spent that money, it was because she was forced to do so by the man who brought her here—the villain who murdered her!"

"Then why did n't he take the other five hundred?" demanded Bostwick.

"He did n't murder her for the sake of robbery. The man or men who robbed Isabel Curwood did not, in all probability, also murder her. There is a tangled coil yet to be straightened out, but we have made a start by learning the truth about this man Taylor's share in it. How much of the money have you spent, Taylor?"

"I only passed that one bill, sir; and I've fifty dollars left of that."

"Then you have the other four bills, and thus you can of course refund the whole five hundred?"

"Oh, yes, sir, I should be only too glad to do so! Do I have to go to jail, then?"

The wretched man's face showed a gleam of hope, and Mr. Bostwick spoke to him kindly:

"You may return the money to your employer, and await developments. You deserve punishment, of course, but I think it will best benefit our cause if you stay right here for the present and go on as usual. Mr. Emmons tells me that you are really an honest man, and I can understand how this one sudden and awful temptation conquered you. But I do not believe it will turn you into an habitual thief."

"Oh, no, sir," exclaimed Taylor; "I'm sure I'll never steal anything again!"

"By the way," said Bostwick, "what were you doing during that dark hour, when the lights went out Tuesday evening?"

"I was all over the house, sir," replied the janitor. "Everybody was ringing their bells for lights, and asking what the matter was, and I suppose I went up to eight or ten different apartments, trying to quiet the women and supply them with lights of some kind or another."

"Then that's practically an alibi," said Bostwick; "for all of these tenants of the house could vouch for your presence in the rooms and halls between seven and eight?"

"That they could, sir!"

A few moments later, Count Kovroff and Mr. Bostwick were walking around to the Plymouth Club, where they hoped to find Stuart.

"I must say, Count Kovroff," remarked the detective, "I don't feel as sure of that janitor's innocence as you do."

"Why, man, it showed in his face. Can't you tell when a man is speaking the truth? He took the five hundred dollars, but he did n't take a thousand, nor did he have anything to do with the murder."

"Then where is the other five hundred?"

"That's what we must find out. Also, where was Miss Curwood between three o'clock and seven? Also, how did she get to the Hammersmith? Was she taken there alive or dead?"

"Heavens! I never thought of it before, but she might have been killed and then taken to the apartment during that dark hour."

"Not likely. It would be easy enough to take her there alive, during that dark time, without being seen, but it would be extremely difficult to carry in a dead body."

"But two men might have done it."

"Yes, of course; it's possible."

"And that might explain the matches."

"I don't think much of the matches as a clue. I am told most of them were the janitor's, and two or three others that were found were supposed to belong to me, because they were stamped 'Riga.' A

fine clue! I trust I am not to be held responsible for all the matches found in New York bearing a name borrowed from Russia. No, we must go to work more practically. I have reason to believe young Stuart knows more than he has yet told, and if we find him at the club, we must manage to discover all he knows. You must do it, Mr. Bostwick, for Stuart does n't like me, and will do all he can to baffle and insult me."

They found Edwin Stuart at his club, sitting alone at a window, and looking morose and taciturn. He greeted the Count coldly, acknowledged the introduction of Mr. Bostwick by a slight bow, and partly turned again to his contemplation of the street.

"I must ask your attention, Mr. Stuart," said Bostwick, in low but decided tones. "As a detective engaged on the Curwood case, I have a right to ask questions which you are obliged to answer."

"By all means," said Stuart listlessly; "ask anything you like. I have nothing to conceal."

"If you have nothing to conceal, Mr. Stuart, why is it that you have steadily refused to tell where you were on Tuesday afternoon?"

"Because that has nothing to do with the tragedy of Miss Curwood's death. I have given a full account of the time I spent with her, of our luncheon, and of my leaving her at her dressmaker's. I see no reason for detailing that story again, and I assert that after leaving her at the door of the modiste's I never saw her again alive."

"You say you have given a full account of your time spent with her," went on Mr. Bostwick smoothly, "but you neglected to mention that you went with her to the bank."

The suddenness of this told. Stuart wheeled around angrily and glared at the detective with an air of bravado that was palpably meant to hide fear. "I did n't!" he declared. "Why do you say that?"

Count Kovroff looked calmly at the young man, and said: "Mr. Stuart, take a bit of friendly advice, and tell the truth. I know your attitude toward me is not entirely friendly, but, as man to man, I beg you will be frank in this matter, and thus save trouble for us who are investigating the case, and also save yourself from infinitely worse trouble."

Stuart looked at the Russian, at first superciliously, and then with a dawning realization of his sincerity.

"Well, then," he said, with a return of his sullen, pettish air, "I did go to the bank with Isabel. But that was before I left her at the dressmaker's, and so has no bearing on the case whatever."

"It has a certain bearing," said the Count, who seemed to have taken the detective's place as inquisitor, "for we have learned that Miss Curwood, in your presence, drew one thousand dollars from the bank. Did she not?"

"Yes." The word was spoken without any inflection whatever.

"Five hundred dollars of that sum is accounted for. The rest is missing. Can you tell us anything about it?"

"No."

"I think you can, and I know it would be better for you if you would. I may as well tell you that if you make a mystery of having received that five hundred dollars from Miss Curwood, you will be subject to grave suspicions, and may have difficulty in freeing yourself from them."

"What do you mean?" asked the young man angrily. "Count Kovroff, you are altogether too deeply interested in my affairs, and always have been."

"At present I have good reason to be. I have learned, Mr. Stuart, that on Tuesday afternoon you were gambling in some rooms not very far away from here; that you lost five hundred dollars, which you paid with crisp, new hundred-dollar notes. Have you anything to say?"

"I have this to say: that you're a meddling spy! And that unless you cease prying into my affairs——"

"Wait a moment, Mr. Stuart," said Bostwick. "This interview with you is official on my part, and Count Kovroff's participation in it is entirely with my approval. You are not therefore in a position to resent it. Also, as you have already been warned, it will be far wiser for you to confess the truth than to withhold it longer."

Stuart assumed a dignity which was clearly a bluff. "Very well, then," he said haughtily. "Since you have ferreted out what I preferred should be a private matter, I will state that Miss Curwood did advance me five hundred dollars as a loan. This being a personal transaction between myself and my fiancée, I saw no reason to exploit it."

"Nor would there have been reason," said the Count, "except for the circumstances of the tragedy. You are in a somewhat dangerous position, Mr. Stuart. Can you prove that Miss Curwood gave you this money willingly?"

"You have my word for it."

"I am sorry, but that is not enough."

"How else can I prove it? There were no witnesses to the transaction."

"Then you can't prove that," said Mr. Bostwick, "but I want you to understand, Mr. Stuart, that unless you can find witnesses to prove your whereabouts for the rest of that afternoon and evening, you stand a very strong chance of being arrested for the murder of Miss Curwood."

"The bare idea of my harming the young woman I was in love with is so absurd that an alibi seems to me unnecessary," said Stuart

slowly; "but rather than be arrested and thus bring both her name and my own into most obnoxious notoriety, I will endeavor to prove to your satisfaction where I spent the whole time in question."

Count Kovroff drew a long breath, as a man greatly relieved.

"I felt sure, Stuart," he said, "that you were guiltless of crime, and that you were hiding only some matters embarrassing to yourself. You can doubtless prove your alibi to Mr. Bostwick, but as for myself, I am satisfied with your word. Also, the explanation of the missing five hundred dollars ought surely to help us in solving the mystery. For we must now understand that whoever committed the crime did not do it for the sake of robbery."

"What, then, could have been the motive?" asked Stuart, drawn against his will into conversation with the Count.

"I have no idea, as yet; and I begin to think that we may never find out. It must have been some highwayman. There seems to be no way to look, and no clue to motive or criminal."

"I don't know," began Bostwick. "My thoughts still run on that janitor. If he were a good actor, he could assume all those expressions of innocence."

"And I dare say you do not feel quite sure of my innocence, either," said Stuart, with a grim look at the detective.

"I should n't go so far as to say that, Mr. Stuart, but the principles of my business require that you should make good your offer of proving your statements by witnesses. Are you willing to go with me now, to speak with any men who can testify in your behalf in the matter?"

Stuart hesitated, and seemed about to refuse. Then he shrugged his shoulders, and, again assuming that air of mock bravado that sat so ill upon him, he said, "Come on, then, and we'll try it. But only you and I, Mr. Bostwick. That will be enough, will it not?"

Count Kovroff did not seem offended at this tacit dismissal of himself, but it was with a cool word of farewell that he turned on his heel and left the two men.

The Count went directly up to the Ponsonby, to report progress to Grace Curwood, and to consult with her what to do next. As a matter of fact, he so thoroughly believed Stuart's statements that he took no interest in the proof of his alibi. Moreover, Count Kovroff was beginning to think that as a detective Mr. Bostwick did n't amount to much. The investigations of the morning had been for the most part suggested by the Count himself, and though the detective had been greatly interested in the work and had often conducted the questioning, yet he had shown no initiative, and had proposed no new efforts.

Regretting Mr. Bostwick's lack of ability, and wondering if it would do to employ some one of greater reputation, the Count came to the Ponsonby and presented himself at the Curwoods' apartment.

He found Mrs. Curwood at home, although Grace was out.

"I'm expecting her every minute," said the mother, as she graciously greeted the Count; "and in the meantime I am glad to have a few words with you alone. Do you not think, my dear Count, that we would better give up this futile search for the man who—who deprived me of my daughter? I fear you cannot understand how a mother's heart, already wrung with grief at the loss of her child, is harrowed by these dreadful scenes. Detectives coming and going, questioning and suspicion of dear friends, reporters begging for interviews and then writing the most dreadful things—a continual publicity—oh, it is all too horrible! I beg that you will not insist on further horrors of this sort, and that you will try to dissuade Grace from doing so. The girl is determined to avenge her sister's death, and while that is a right spirit in theory, it entails too much misery in its practice. Please, Count Kovroff, assure me that you will use your influence with Grace to stop these proceedings."

"You place me in a most difficult position, my dear madam. My own inclination entirely coincides with your daughter's, and, though I should be only too glad to aid or comfort you in any way, I cannot feel it would be right not to bring this wrong-doer to justice, if it can possibly be done."

"But have you a right to put your sense of justice ahead of a mother's wishes? Must I be sacrificed in a hundred ways, that the law of the land may take its course? I suppose I ought to take a broader view of the matter, and to appreciate the majesty of the law and the justice of punishment; but I can't. I have always shrunk from publicity of any sort, and I ask only permission to be left alone to mourn my dead in peace."

"I do appreciate your attitude," said the Count gently, "and I think it would be appreciated by the loveliest and dearest mothers in the land. It seems to me the natural thought of the feminine and maternal spirit, and I honor you for your expression of it. But, Mrs. Curwood, I cannot bring myself to give up my desire to see this crime avenged, and, though I acknowledge your greater right, yet Grace, too, should have her wishes considered. As Isabel's sister and as a rational, intelligent young woman, her rights cannot be denied. You must forgive me if I'm torn between respect and loyalty to you, and—I may as well tell you here and now—my love for Grace."

Mrs. Curwood's look of astonishment almost brought a smile to the Count's face.

"Grace!" she exclaimed. "I thought you cared for Isabel."

"Of course I admired Isabel, but I love Grace. However, I do not want to say this to her now, while the poor child is so wrought up with these dreadful experiences. But I want you to know, Mrs. Cur-

wood, and I hope that after a short time we may be able to have done with this publicity that you so naturally dislike, and that I may then tell Grace what is in my heart."

Notwithstanding Mrs. Curwood's sorrow and her annoyance at the publicity in which she found herself so unpleasantly placed, she was sufficiently a woman of the world to feel elated at the Count's avowal. She had hoped that he had desired to marry Isabel, but since it was his wish to marry Grace, her ambition was equally gratified.

"Of course I do not know Grace's sentiments toward you, Count Kovroff, but I can assure you that should you inspire her with affection I shall be very glad. After what you have told me, I cannot hope that you will consider my wishes before hers in this matter of which we have been talking, but you must rest assured that whatever you and she choose to do in the way of furthering these terrible investigations, I shall not criticise or object to."

"Thank you, Mrs. Curwood. Though my own instincts urge me on, and though I feel sure Grace would be thwarted in her intentions only with great difficulty, yet I assure you we will do nothing definite without your sanction. But here comes Grace herself, and I think both you and I are ready to defer to her wishes."

Grace came in accompanied by Mr. Weatherby and Mr. Britton. The girl was eager to learn what the new detective had accomplished, and listened eagerly while Count Kovroff related the events of the morning.

Though the whole story was of interest, yet, as Lawyer Britton remarked, it seemed to lead nowhere. Learning of the janitor's theft of five hundred dollars almost exonerated him from the graver crime, and by tracing the other five hundred dollars to Stuart, it almost set *him* free from suspicion. And yet there was a possibility that either of these men might be guilty. And Count Kovroff was compelled to admit that Mr. Bostwick seemed unable to think of any other trail to pursue.

"He seems wholly lacking in initiative, in ingenuity, and even in enterprise," declared the Count.

"Then why not let it rest at that, and give up the inquiry?" begged Mrs. Curwood, addressing her plea to her daughter. "It is my opinion that we never can succeed in this quest, and to keep it up means only useless expense of energy, time, and money."

"Give it up? Never!" exclaimed Grace, with flashing eyes. "If the human being who killed my sister is still on this earth, he shall be brought to justice, if I have to spend my whole life to accomplish that end!"

"My opinion coincides with that of Miss Curwood," said Count Kovroff, "but I have no wish to be obtrusive. If the investigation is

to be carried on, I will willingly do all I can to further it; but if it is to be stopped, I will abide by the decision of you who are most interested."

"It is to be continued," declared Grace. "Of course the decision rests with my mother and me, and though Mother does not entirely agree with me, yet I will undertake to overcome her objections. Please understand, then, that the inquiry is to go on, and advise me which way to turn next."

She cast an appealing glance at the three men in the room, and each seemed to return the glance in a different way. Count Kovroff looked at her with undisguised admiration, and, though he carefully refrained from allowing his love for her to show in his face, it was easily to be seen that he would work with her and for her to the desired end.

Mr. Weatherby looked at Grace a little reproachfully. A man of the world, experienced in worldly ways and social conventions, he showed in his face his disapproval of a young woman thus taking a stand which he considered entirely out of her sphere. However, he said nothing, for though he had been Isabel's guardian, he had no authority over Grace.

Mr. Britton, rather to the surprise of all present, took a decided stand. He looked at Grace a moment thoughtfully, and then he said: "Since you ask for advice, I will offer some. I thoroughly approve of your attitude, and I'm of the opinion that the right sort of investigation will result successfully. But I agree with Count Kovroff that the detective now employed is not one of sufficient intelligence to solve this mystery. My advice is therefore that the best talent available be sought. I think there is but one man in this country who could discover the murderer of Isabel Curwood, and that man is Fleming Stone."

"I never heard of him," said Mr. Weatherby. "Is he a famous detective?"

"Yes," said Mr. Britton; "he is famous among the people who know of his work. But he cares nothing for notoriety, and often conducts desperate cases while the public is unaware of his connection with them."

"Then let us employ him, by all means," said Count Kovroff; "that is, if the ladies approve of this plan."

"Indeed I do!" exclaimed Grace, her intense face eager with the thought of the probable success of the great detective.

"And I do not," said Mrs. Curwood. "These famous detectives are usually greatly overrated. They are exceedingly expensive, and they do no better work than an ordinary Central Office man."

"It all rests with you, Mother," said Grace, looking affectionately

at Mrs. Curwood. "We're going to do just as you say, no matter what I think."

"Then I say, employ Mr. Stone," said Mrs. Curwood, after a moment's more hesitation. "You all know my dislike of these proceedings, but since you wish it, Grace, and especially if the work can be conducted without publicity, I will waive my objections."

"That's a good, plucky little mother," said Grace affectionately, "and we will all use every effort to keep the whole work as quiet and private as possible."

"I think that can be accomplished without any trouble," said Mr. Britton. "Fleming Stone is not likely to allow publicity regarding the cases he undertakes."

"Will you send for him, then, Mr. Britton?" asked Grace. "And can you do it right away?"

"Yes," returned the lawyer; "I will send for him at once."

CHAPTER X.

AN UNDENIABLE WITNESS

ALTHOUGH Fleming Stone was not expected until Saturday morning, he arrived in New York Friday evening, and Mr. Britton took him at once to the Ponsonby.

As Mr. Weatherby and Edwin Stuart were also calling on the Curwoods, there ensued a general discussion of the case.

Even Mrs. Curwood was influenced by the charm of Fleming Stone's personality, and forgot her prejudice against detectives as she listened to his direct, straightforward questions.

It was like the work of a skilled physician. He inquired concerning all the details, and, though expressing no opinions, he imbued every one present with the feeling that he would successfully accomplish the quest.

Without sensation, without excitement, he rapidly asked questions, now from one and now from another, until he was in possession of all the information they could give him. But his method was not inquisitorial; it was rather conversational; and each member of the little group, even though at first antagonistic, succumbed to the dominating power of the man's mentality.

He made no memoranda, but sat comfortably idle in a large easy chair, and it was impossible to tell from the expressions on his inscrutable face which of his questions were of vital importance and which trivial.

He asked no personal questions. He wanted only such facts and evidence as had already been learned, thus putting himself in possession of the results of work already done.

"And so you see, Mr. Stone," said Mr. Britton, at last, "we are entirely at sea. The two detectives already employed have, to my mind, merely muddled the case, without making any headway, and we look to you for the true solution."

"I trust I shall discover it," said Fleming Stone gravely; "but I cannot agree that your detectives have muddled the case. As nearly as I can judge, they started out all right, but they stopped too soon."

"They did n't know how to go on," cried Grace impetuously; "that's why we sent for you, Mr. Stone."

After all, Grace and Mr. Britton had given Mr. Stone most of the information he wanted. Mr. Weatherby and Edwin Stuart had said very little, though both seemed intensely interested, and were fully appreciative of the detective's evident ability.

Mrs. Curwood was frankly charmed with the man, and said apologetically: "I did oppose your coming, Mr. Stone, but now I am very glad you are here. I feel sure that you can help us in the right sort of way."

"I trust you will not find your confidence misplaced," said Mr. Stone, looking at Mrs. Curwood in his grave, courteous way. "But I must warn you that, having taken the case, I shall pursue it straight to the end, without regard as to where the blow may fall."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Curwood, with what was almost a little gasp, and she could not keep her eyes from straying in the direction of Stuart.

That young man sat staring at Stone as if fascinated. Indeed, a spell seemed to have fallen upon all the assembly, and little was said except by the detective himself.

"I think there is no doubt," said Stone finally, "that Miss Curwood met her death during that hour when the electric lights were out. I think she was induced to go into the vacant apartment, and in the darkness was led upstairs by the one who subsequently murdered her. But this, of course, is merely an opinion based on what you have told me."

"But is it not strange," commented Mr. Weatherby, "that Isabel should have been willing to go with a stranger into a darkened house?"

"She may not have gone willingly," said Mr. Stone, "though of course she made no loud outcry, as that would have been heard by the hall-boy. And, too, the man who persuaded her to go there may not have been a stranger."

Again Mrs. Curwood found it impossible to keep her eyes from straying to Edwin Stuart's face, and again she saw the young man gazing at the detective as if hanging on his very words.

"And now," said Fleming Stone, "having heard all you can tell me, I should like to see anything that may have to do with the affair."

"Clues, you mean?" asked Grace. "There are n't any, Mr. Stone, except the matches, and I think the Coroner or Mr. Klein has them."

"Tell me about them," said Fleming Stone, smiling gently at the eager young face.

So Grace and Mr. Britton described the two sorts of matches found in the apartment, and, having heard all about the janitor's story, Stone merely nodded his head, and seemed to consider the information filed for future use.

"You see, the matches marked 'Riga' have n't yet been explained," said Grace, who was herself assuming the argumentative air of a detective. "It made some people think"—here she cast an indignant glance at Stuart—"that they implicated Count Kovroff, a Russian, and a great friend of ours. But I think no one suspects him now, as he has done more than any one else to help us in our investigations."

She glanced defiantly around the room, but no one took up the challenge, and as Mr. Stone had already heard the details of the Count's connection with the affair, he only said, "I believe Riga is a Russian town, but matches bear so many foreign names that they are not very dependable as evidence. Have you the clothes your sister was wearing that day, and anything she may have carried or had with her?"

"Yes," said Grace; "shall I send for them?"

Mr. Stone said yes, and Grace rang for Marie and asked her to bring the garments in question.

The thought of this exhibition was too much for Mrs. Curwood, and she hastily left the room.

Stuart too seemed overcome at the sight of Isabel's personal belongings, and when the maid brought them, he buried his face in his hands, refusing to look.

Mr. Stone was gravely interested, and examined the things with a practised eye, as if noting peculiarities that might be of import. He was especially interested in the feather boa.

"Did she often wear this?" he asked, holding it up at arms' length.

"No," said Grace; "it is an old boa, and she never wore it once this winter except that very day."

"You are sure?" Stone persisted, and Grace declared she was certain.

The hat, coat, and gown were examined briefly, and then Mr. Stone turned his attention to the pretty little hand-bag. He noted the broken watch which was set in the flap of the bag, and then examined its contents. It was a dainty affair, enamelled black leather on the outside, but lined with white kid, and having various little pockets which held a tiny mirror, a tinier powder-box, a gold pencil-case, and sundry other trinkets.

It was explained to him that the thousand dollars had been taken out,

but the other money she had with her, and the other contents of the bag, were exactly as they were when found in the Hammersmith apartment.

Fleming Stone examined everything in the bag minutely, then closed it with a snap, and returned it to Grace.

"I think," he said, "I have all the information you can give me, or that I can learn from these things of Miss Curwood's. Please take care of them for twenty-four hours longer. I will go away now, and I will return here, Miss Curwood, to-morrow evening. May I ask that you will all meet me here then, as I may be in a position to ask for further information?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Grace disappointedly. "I thought you were going to say you would then tell us all."

"Don't be impatient, Grace," said Mr. Britton, a little reprovingly. "Though Mr. Stone will doubtless discover all eventually, it is not probable he can accomplish it in twenty-four hours."

"No, indeed," agreed Mr. Weatherby, "that would be too quick work even for a magician. May I ask, Mr. Stone, how long you think it will take you to track down this villain?"

"That is impossible to tell, Mr. Weatherby," said the detective; "you must remember I have done nothing as yet but to learn what others have done."

Fleming Stone went away with Mr. Britton, and the other two men shortly left also.

"He's perfectly wonderful," said Grace, with enthusiasm, to her mother; "I had no idea a detective could be so good-looking, and so really fascinating. I'm going to ask Count Kovroff to come to-morrow night, for I want him to meet Mr. Stone as soon as possible. Perhaps he can help him, for the Count is pretty clever as a detective himself."

The next evening Fleming Stone did not arrive at the Ponsonby until after all the others had come. When Mr. Britton appeared, he said that Mr. Stone had asked him to go on alone, saying that he would follow later.

"Has he learned anything?" asked Grace eagerly.

"I don't know," returned Mr. Britton. "He was away all day, and, though we dined together, he said little about the case, explaining that he would tell us all together this evening."

And then Fleming Stone appeared, and with him Mr. Klein, the detective from headquarters. They paused a few moments in the hall before entering the drawing-room, and seemed to be giving some directions to the servant who had opened the door.

The group in the drawing-room was the same as that of the night before, except for the addition of Count Kovroff. He was anxious to meet the new detective, and greeted Mr. Stone cordially when introduced.

"Have you discovered anything?" cried Grace.

"Yes, Miss Curwood, I have discovered a great deal. Indeed, I think I may say I have never undertaken a case where the truth unfolded itself to me so rapidly and so unmistakably as it has done to-day. Shall I give you the history of my discoveries?"

"Oh, please do!" and Grace sat down between her mother and Count Kovroff to listen to the recital.

Fleming Stone had no need to complain of lack of interest in his audience. In his calm, direct way, he began to talk, and every one present listened as if under a spell. Stone's eyes travelled quietly from one face to another, looking at no one especially, yet noting the effects of his words on each person present.

"As the last definite information of Miss Curwood seemed to be that Mr. Stuart left her at her dressmaker's at three o'clock, I went there first. I did not go in, as you told me the dressmaker declared that Miss Curwood had not been there, so I stood in front of the door, thinking what Miss Curwood might have done at that time. There were most attractive shops on either side of Madame Laurestine's, and, going first into one of them, that of a curio-dealer, I inquired if Miss Curwood had been there on the day in question. The young woman in charge said she knew Miss Curwood by sight, and could positively assert she had not been in the shop for weeks. I then tried the shop on the other side, that of a milliner, with better success. The proprietor, an attractive young French woman, informed me that Miss Curwood had come into her shop last Tuesday. She said further that Miss Curwood told her she had intended going into Madame Laurestine's, but, seeing a wonderful hat in the milliner's window, had gone in there to try it on. The milliner then said that Miss Curwood stayed there a long time, trying on many different hats."

"That's just like Isabel!" exclaimed Grace. "Once she went into a hat shop, she would stay the whole afternoon. She was perfectly daft about hats!"

"That is practically what the milliner said," resumed Mr. Stone. "She said Miss Curwood was one of her best customers, and often spent an hour or two trying on hats, which sometimes she would purchase and sometimes not. Then, it seemed, Miss Curwood stayed at the milliner's until after four o'clock. She then went out of the shop, and a gentleman who was just passing recognized her and spoke to her. The girl who opened the door for Miss Curwood saw the meeting, and noticed the gentleman especially, but though she described him, she did not know his name. After a few moments' conversation, Miss Curwood and this gentleman walked away toward uptown. As the description given by the young woman suggested the personal appearance of Mr. Weatherby, I wish to inquire if it was he who met Miss Curwood as she came out of the milliner's shop."

Leonard Weatherby looked astounded. He sat upright and stared at Fleming Stone. "No," he said; "it was not I. I suppose there are thousands of men in New York City whose general description would be fairly like a description of myself, but it was not I. You will have to make another discovery, Mr. Fleming Stone."

"Then," the detective's calm, musical voice went on, "I had learned that the next news heard of Miss Curwood was the telephone message received here by the maid in Mrs. Curwood's absence. It is often difficult, and sometimes impossible, to trace a telephone message, but I succeeded in learning that this was sent from the Plaza Hotel. I went to the Plaza tea-room, and learned that a lady and gentleman, corresponding in general description to Miss Curwood and Mr. Weatherby, were there for afternoon tea last Tuesday, and that they sat talking at their tea-table for a very long time. I learned from the waiter who served them that the lady sat on a certain small sofa, the gentleman occupying a chair opposite. By very careful examination of that sofa, I found in its upholstery no less than three bits of gray feathery fluff, which proves conclusively that the lady was Miss Isabel Curwood. Mr. Weatherby, were you with her at tea on that day?"

"No, I was not," and Leonard Weatherby spoke very positively. "Your bits of gray feather may be from Isabel's boa, and they may not, but you must search further for her companion at the tea-table."

"Yes?" said Fleming Stone politely. "Well, as this couple lingered so unusually long at the tea-table, and conversed so earnestly, it is not surprising that the waiter should have overheard a few words of their conversation now and then. And he informed me that the young lady was trying to persuade the gentleman to give her a large amount of money, which, she declared, belonged to her."

At this point, Mr. Britton interrupted the speaker to say: "Now, look here, Mr. Stone, I'm afraid you're on the wrong tack. Such a conversation might easily have occurred between Miss Curwood and her guardian, but if Mr. Weatherby asserts that he was not at the Plaza with his ward, you may be sure he was not."

"Thank you, Britton," said Mr. Weatherby. "I certainly was not there. If Isabel was, she had some other companion."

"Yes?" and Fleming Stone's inflection held a world of meaning. "I will now proceed. The man and woman I tell of left the Plaza Hotel about seven o'clock, just a few moments before the electric lights went out. From the man at the door, who happened to notice them, I learned that they walked from the hotel and turned toward down-town. From there we lose trace of them for the moment. Although Mr. Weatherby denies his identity with the man in question, I had reason, or thought I had reason, to think it was he, and so I investigated the manner in which he spent the day last Tuesday."

"Spy!" exclaimed Weatherby angrily.

"If, as you say, it was not you with Miss Curwood, you can have no objections to having your movements traced on that day. I discovered, Mr. Weatherby, that you lunched with a friend at the Café Tricotrin. Did you not?"

"Yes, I did;" and the man spoke with an air of bravado.

"On the way out, your friend bought cigars at a stand in the café near the door?"

"Very likely; I don't remember especially. But I usually smoke after luncheon."

"You need n't tax your memory to recall it. I have learned the facts. You lighted your cigar there at the stand, picking up thoughtlessly a card of the matches that they give to their patrons. These matches were stamped 'Riga.'"

"It is not—it is not so!" declared Mr. Weatherby, struggling with an obstruction in his throat, that seemed to impede his speech.

"It is so. It would be wiser, Mr. Weatherby, for you to make no further assertions. I will do the talking. Having learned what happened at the Café Tricotrin, I visited your rooms this afternoon, when you were not at home."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Weatherby, half springing from his seat.

"I examined your rooms thoroughly, and after a most careful search, I found a few bits of gray feather."

"Absurd!" declared Mr. Weatherby, with an attempt at a sneer.

"Not at all absurd. The pieces can be indisputably proved to be from Miss Curwood's boa. Her sister assures us she wore it only that day, and I therefore assert, Mr. Weatherby, that you were with Miss Curwood on Tuesday, or that you were then or have been since with some other lady who chanced to have a boa precisely similar, and which was old enough to shed its feather continually. While searching your apartment I discovered a letter from a friend of yours in Pennsylvania, asking you to engage for him an apartment not far from your own rooms. I visited several real-estate agents and found that one of them had given you a list of apartments to look at, which included the Hammersmith. I secured also from your desk a photograph of yourself, and, going to the Hammersmith, I showed it to the hall-boy and janitor. They declared that you had been there on Monday to look at that very apartment in which Miss Curwood's body was afterward found. Mr. Weatherby, I think, in view of all this circumstantial evidence, we are justified in suspecting that you are implicated in this crime we are investigating."

"You do?" fairly shouted Leonard Weatherby. "You do, do you? Well, now let me tell you that your feathers, and your matches, and your tea-table talk, amount to nothing at all! I can prove a complete

alibi for that dark hour on Tuesday evening. When the lights suddenly flashed on, I was in the smoking-room at my club, and I can prove it by a dozen men who were there at the same time. I had been sitting there all through the dark hour."

"You were there when the lights flashed up. But you had not been there all through the dark hour. By the way, what chair did you occupy?"

"A large chair near the front window."

"Exactly. An upholstered chair, deeply tufted. Well, this afternoon a page at your club spent a half hour searching in those deep tufts, and I thus added four more bits of gray fluffy feather to my collection. Mr. Weatherby, that trail of feathers will yet prove your guilt, and on the evidence of that, and the presence of your own matches on the scene of the crime, and the story, undoubtedly true, of the waiter at the tea-room, I order your arrest for the murder of Isabel Curwood."

"It's a lie!" burst out Mr. Weatherby, and though his face proclaimed his guilt beyond doubt, he determinedly tried to make a final stand. "You can't arrest me," he cried. "It is not true evidence! It's only a series of sensational detective effects! You have no real witnesses, you have no direct evidence, and I deny your statements and accusations from beginning to end!"

"Come in, officer," said Fleming Stone quietly, and from the hall a constable entered, evidently expecting to make an arrest.

"One moment," said Fleming Stone, as the policeman approached Mr. Weatherby. "I know it is a shock to you all," he said, as he turned to his astonished listeners, "but it is none the less true that Leonard Weatherby, on some plausible pretext, took his ward, Miss Curwood, into that vacant apartment and there strangled her. He did this because he has squandered or stolen all of her money, of which he had charge. His speculations have turned out badly, he is himself ruined financially, and he has misappropriated the funds which he held in trust. Therefore, when Miss Curwood asked for her fortune, he was not able to give it to her, and as perhaps she was importunate, he resorted to desperate means of quieting her. Whether it was premeditated, or whether the circumstance of the occurrence of the dark hour prompted his deed, I do not know; but, though there was no eyewitness to the act, Mr. Weatherby left a record of his own crime, to which he set his hand and seal."

"What do you mean by that?" inquired Mr. Britton hoarsely.

"Send for Miss Curwood's hand-bag," said Fleming Stone abruptly.

The hand-bag was brought, and for a moment Stone held it, unopened.

"Officer Fiske," he said quietly, "take a print of Mr. Weatherby's

left thumb. If he is innocent, he can of course have no objection to this."

Drawing a prepared slip from his pocket, the officer pressed Mr. Weatherby's thumb upon it, for the man himself seemed too bewildered either to assent or refuse.

Fleming Stone took the slip of paper and laid it on the table in front of him.

"Miss Curwood, you remember, was strangled in complete darkness. The murderer could not know that she was surely dead, except by some test. What was the test? He took from Miss Curwood's own hand-bag this little mirror." As he spoke, Stone took out a small mirror, the back of which was covered with white kid. "This mirror he held against her mouth, to see if she breathed, meantime lighting matches to observe if there were moisture on the glass. There was not, and he returned the mirror to its place, and silently went his way. But he had then set his hand and seal to his crime, for on the white kid back of this little mirror is, you observe, a distinct thumb-print. We have just taken a print of Mr. Weatherby's thumb. I have not yet compared these two; if they are not identical, my conclusions are all wrong. Mr. Britton, will you compare them? Here is a magnifying glass."

James Britton rose, and, going to the table, studied the two thumb-prints through the glass. Though the one on the white kid was faint, the markings were discernible.

"They are identical," he said, in a low voice.

"Officer, arrest Mr. Weatherby," said Fleming Stone, "for to his own crime he has unmistakably set his hand and seal!"

REMINDERS

LIFE is full of dangerous crossings, and Conscience is the Flagman.

IT is unfortunately true that the Fruit of Discord is frequently preserved in Family Jars.

A PROMISE should not be kept too long. It were far better to fulfil it at once and thus be rid of it.

THE proof of the Pudding may be in the eating, but what does it avail us when it is too late to correct the proofs?

THE Laws of Supply and Demand are inexorable. The Freckle would be considered a beauty-spot if there were only two or three of them.

John Kendrick Bangs

HIGH LIGHTS OF SOUTH AMERICA

By Forbes Lindsay

Author of "Captain John Smith," etc.

WITH the recently aroused interest in South America has come to most of us the realization of the fact that our ideas regarding that continent are vague and incomplete, when they are not absolutely erroneous. We have scant knowledge of the physical features of the region, and less of the resources, the politics, and the people of its countries.

Many of our false impressions are derived from the common practice of studying geography with the aid of a map on Mercator's projection, which represents Greenland to be larger than South America. On such a map, one thousand miles along latitude 60 degrees occupies twice as much space as does one thousand miles upon the equator, so that the distance from New York to San Francisco appears to be just about equal to that from Guayaquil to Pernambuco. A man who entertains such a gross misconception is subjected to a violent conflict of ideas when he learns that the territory of the Republic of Brazil is two hundred thousand square miles in excess of the area of the United States, and that Argentina is as large as all of our country east of the Mississippi. Reference to a globe, or to a map on the polyconic projection, will make these facts immediately apparent, and will indicate that the southern continent is nearly the same size as the northern.

It is safe to say that the majority of Americans conceive of the twin continent as lying to the south of them. As a matter of fact, a vessel bound from New York to Rio Janeiro needs to sail as far eastward as if going to Europe, before it takes a southern course. A line projected due south from New York would leave almost all of South America to the east, and would cut the Pacific Ocean many miles to the west of Valparaiso.

Contrary to the general conception, the Isthmus of Panama runs from east to west. The portion containing the Canal Zone forms a northerly loop, so that a sectional map of it presents the Pacific in an unaccustomed position on the right-hand side, and the Atlantic on the

left. The visitor to Panama has the novel experience of seeing the sun rise out of the Pacific Ocean.

The American who would laugh at a foreigner if he should ask him, "What is the climate of the United States?" will not hesitate to put a similar question to a native of Colombia or Chili.

We know, of course, that altitude is the chief factor in influencing temperature. We can readily understand that a man travelling two miles vertically would experience greater changes of climate than he would in travelling two thousand miles latitudinally. We are aware that the major portions of Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and Chili are included in the Andean mountain system, and that Brazil and Argentina contain extensive plateaus, upon which the cereals of the temperate zone find congenial conditions. Nevertheless, we harbor the idea that a uniformly hot and trying climate prevails in all parts of South America.

Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay have a combined area approximating 1,500,000 square miles—about one-fifth of the total extent of South America—nearly all of which is within the temperate zone.

In general, the seasons of tropical South America are two, the wet and the dry, but the time of their respective occurrences varies with the different localities. For instance, in Bolivia, the rainy season is from December to May; in Panama, the dry season falls within the same period.

A wide-spread delusion, acquired from such writers as Reclus and Rollins, is that Patagonia is a barren, almost uninhabitable, and intensely cold region, in which a race of giants is found.

The Indians of Patagonia are not extraordinarily tall. The winters of the country are not so severe as those of Pennsylvania. Natives of Europe and North America are living in the land with comfort. The soil is so rich that sheep and cattle derive ample pasture from it all the year round.

Our knowledge of the magnificent waterways of South America is likely to be confined to a few facts relating to the Amazon. Perhaps the reader has heard that the outpour of that mighty river is so immense that it renders the water of the ocean fresh for many miles from the shore, but is he aware that ocean-going vessels proceed up the stream in a natural channel as far as Iquitos, in Peru, so that here we have the extraordinary condition of a seaport 2,300 miles inland from the coast? This circumstance gives Peru the peculiar distinction among South American countries of having a direct outlet to the Atlantic as well as to the Pacific Ocean.

But the Amazon is not the only majestic river in South America. Both the Plata and the Parana discharge upwards of one million cubic feet of water per second, or a volume twice as great as that of the Mississippi.

In passing, it may be interesting to note that, while the Indians called the last named the "Father of Waters," they styled the Parana "The Mother of the Sea."

When Niagara has been shorn of its scenic attractions, the American tourist may find in the cataracts of Yguassu, San Francisco, and Guaro, waterfalls that rival, if they do not surpass, any in the world in beauty and volume. The cataract of Yguassu is in the river of that name, above its confluence with the Parana. The falls of Paolo Affonso are in San Francisco, an affluent of the Amazon. The Guaro is in the Cuyaba in the Matta Grosso—thick jungle—in the country of Brazil. They are as well known below the equator as Niagara or the falls of the Yosemite are to us. It is questionable, none the less, whether one in a hundred college graduates of this country could tell you where any one of these natural wonders of South America is situated.

Of the material progress of South America we have only the faintest realization. It will disturb our self-complacency somewhat to be told that during recent years Rio Janeiro has spent more money in public improvements than has any city of the United States, with the exception of New York.

Buenos Aires is nearly the size of Philadelphia. It has in *La Prensa* the finest newspaper establishment in the world, and, in the Jockey Club, the most luxurious club-house in existence. Its docks are the most commodious and costly in the Americas. Its opera-house, erected at an expense of ten million dollars, is the finest in the Western Hemisphere.

How many Americans have heard of Sao Paulo? It is a city with a population of three hundred thousand, and about two-thirds of the world's coffee supply is shipped from it annually.

Manaos is a thoroughly modern city, about the size of Allentown, Pennsylvania. It boasts handsome buildings, electric lights, trolley-cars, and all manner of conveniences and luxuries. But it is situated in the heart of the rubber forest of Amazonia, surrounded by savage tribes of Indians, and one thousand miles from anywhere. However, ships from Liverpool, Hamburg, and New York come to its wharves for cargoes of rubber from which our automobile tires are made.

Distinctly curious in respect to situation are the South American cities of the Pacific coast. Quito stands at an altitude of about nine thousand feet above sea level. Almost all the cities of Peru are in the mountains, several of them at elevations considerably in excess of ten thousand feet.

A matter in which we habitually underrate South American people is that of intellectual development. The average educational attainment among their better classes is considerably higher than among ours. Culture has always been fostered by them. Lima and Cordoba have universities which are older than Harvard and Yale.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF ALANNA

By Kathleen Norris

"NEW white dress, is it?" said Mrs. Costello in bland surprise. "Well, my, my, my! You'll have Dad and me in the poorhouse!"

She had been knitting a pink and white jacket for somebody's baby, but now she put it into the silk bag on her knee, dropped it on the floor, and with one generous sweep of her big arms gathered Alanna into her lap instead. Alanna was delighted to have at last attracted her mother's whole attention, after some ten minutes of unregarded whispering in her ear. She settled her thin little person with the conscious pleasure of a petted cat.

"What do you know about that, Dad?" said Mrs. Costello absently, as she stiffened the big bow over Alanna's temple into a more erect position. "You and Tess could wear your Christmas procession dresses," she suggested to the little girl.

Teresa, apparently absorbed until this instant in what the young Costellos never called anything but the "library book," although that volume changed character and title week after week, now shut it abruptly, came around the reading-table to her mother's side, and said in a voice full of pained reminder:

"Mother! *Every one* will have new white dresses and blue sashes for Superior's feast!"

"I bet you Superior won't!" said Jim frivolously, from the picture puzzle he and Dan were reconstructing. Alanna laughed joyously, but Teresa looked shocked.

"Mother, ought he say that about Superior?" she asked.

"Jimmy, don't you be pert about the Sisters," said his mother mildly. And suddenly the Mayor's paper was lowered, and he was looking keenly at his son over his glasses.

"What did you say, *Jim*?" said he. Jim was instantly smitten scarlet and dumb, but Mrs. Costello hastily explained that it was but a bit of boy's nonsense, and dismissed it by introducing the subject of the new white dresses.

"Well, well, well! There's nothing like having two girls in society!" said the Mayor genially, winding one of Teresa's curls about his fat finger. "What's this for, now? Somebody graduating?"

"It's Mother Superior's Golden Jubilee," explained Teresa, "and there will be a reunion of 'lumnæ, and plays by the girls, you know, and duets by the big girls, and needlework by the Spanish girls. And our room and Sister Claudia's is giving a new chapel window, a dollar a girl, and Sister Ligouri's room is giving the organ bench."

"And our room is giving a spear," said Alanna uncertainly.

"A spear, darlin'?" wondered her mother. "What would you give that to Superior for?" Jim and Dan looked up expectantly, the Mayor's mouth twitched. Alanna buried her face in her mother's neck, where she whispered an explanation.

"Well, of course!" said Mrs. Costello presently, to the company at large. Her eye held a warning that her oldest sons did not miss. "As she says, 't is a ball all covered with islands and maps, Dad. A globe, that's the other name for it!"

"Ah, yes, a spear, to be sure!" assented the Mayor mildly, and Alanna returned to view.

"But the best of the whole program is the grandchildren's part," volunteered Teresa. "You know, Mother, the girls whose mothers went to Notre Dame are called the 'grandchildren.' Alanna and I are, there are twenty-two of us in all. And we are going to have a special march and a special song, and present Superior with a bouquet!"

"And maybe Teresa's going to present it and say the salutation!" exulted Alanna.

"No, Marg'ret Hammond will," Teresa corrected her quickly. "Marg'ret's three months older than me. First they were going to have me, but Marg'ret's the oldest. And she does it awfully nicely, does n't she, Alanna? Sister Celia says it's really the most important thing of the day. And we all stand round Marg'ret while she does it. And the best of it all is, it's a surprise for Superior!"

"Not a surprise like Christmas surprises," amended Alanna conscientiously. "Superior sort of knows we are doing something, because she hears the girls practising, and she sees us going upstairs to rehearse. But she will p'tend to be surprised."

"And it's new dresses all 'round, eh?" said her father.

"Oh, yes, we must!" said Teresa anxiously.

"Well, I'll see about it," promised Mrs. Costello.

"Don't you want to afford the expense, Mother?" Alanna whispered in her ear. Mrs. Costello was much touched.

"Don't you worry about that, lovey!" said she. The Mayor had presumably returned to his paper, but his absent eyes were fixed far beyond the printed sheet he still held tilted carefully to the light.

"Marg'ret Hammond—whose girl is that, then?" he asked presently.

"She's a girl whose mother died," supplied Alanna cheerfully. "She's awfully smart. Sister Helen teaches her piano for nothing,—she's a great friend of mine. She likes me, does n't she, Tess?"

"She's three years older'n you are, Alanna," said Teresa briskly, "and she's in our room! I don't see how you can say she's a friend of yours! Do you, Mother?"

"Well," said Alanna, getting red, "she is. She gave me a rag when I cut my knee, and one day she lifted the cup down for me when Mary Deane stuck it up on a high nail, so that none of us could get drinks, and when Sister Rose said, 'Who is talking?' she said, 'Alanna Costello was n't, 'cause she's sitting here as quiet as a mouse!'"

"All that sounds very kind and friendly to me," said Mrs. Costello soothingly.

"I expect that's Doctor Hammond's girl?" said the Mayor.

"No, sir," said Dan. "These are the Hammonds who live over by the bridge. There's just two kids, Marg'ret and Joe, and their father. Joe served the eight o'clock Mass with me one week,—you know, Jim, the week you were sick."

"Sure," said Jim. "Hammond's a nice feller."

Their father scraped his chin with a fat hand.

"I know them," he said ruminatively. Mrs. Costello looked up.

"That's not the Hammond you had trouble with at the shop, Frank?" she said.

"Well, I'm thinking maybe it is," her husband admitted. "He's had a good deal of bad luck one way or another, since he lost his wife." He turned to Teresa. "You be as nice as you can to little Marg'ret Hammond, Tess," said he.

"I wonder who the wife was?" said Mrs. Costello. "If this little girl is a 'grandchild,' I ought to know the mother. Ask her, Tess."

Teresa hesitated.

"I don't play with her much, Mother. And she's sort of shy," she began.

"I'll ask her," said Alanna boldly. "I don't care if she is going on twelve. She goes up to the chapel every day, and I'll stop her to-morrow, and ask her! She's always friendly to me."

Mayor Costello had returned to his paper. But a few hours later, when all the children except Gertrude were settled for the night, and Gertrude, in a state of milky beatitude, was looking straight into her mother's face above her with blue eyes heavy with sleep, he enlightened his wife further concerning the Hammonds.

"He was with me at the shop," said the Mayor, "and I never was sorrier to let any man go. But it seemed like his wife's death drove him quite wild. First it was fighting with the other boys, and then drink, and then complaints here and there and everywhere, and Kelly would n't stand for it. I wish I'd kept him on a bit longer, myself, what with his having the two children and all. He's got a fine head on him, and a very good way with people in trouble. Kelly himself was always sending him to arrange about flowers and carriages and all. Poor lad! And then came the night he was tipsy, and got locked in the warehouse——"

"I know," said Mrs. Costello, with a pitying shake of the head, as she gently adjusted the sleeping Gertrude. "Has he had a job since, Frank?"

"He was with a piano house," said her husband uneasily, as he went slowly on with his preparations for the night. "Two children, has he? And a boy on the altar. 'T is hard that the children have to pay for it."

"Alanna'll find out who the wife was. She never fails me," said Mrs. Costello, turning from Gertrude's crib with sudden decision in her voice. "And I'll do something, never fear!"

Alanna did not fail. She came home the next day brimming with the importance of her fulfilled mission.

"Her mother's name was Harmonica Moore!" announced Alanna, who could be depended upon for unfailing inaccuracy in the matter of names. Teresa and the boys burst into joyous laughter, but the information was close enough for Mrs. Costello.

"Monica Moore!" she exclaimed. "Well, for pity's sake! Of course I knew her, and a sweet dear girl she was, too. Stop laughing at Alanna, all of you, or I'll send you upstairs until Dad gets after you. Very quiet and shy she was, but the lovely singing voice! There was n't a tune in the world she would n't lilt to you if you asked her. Well, the poor child, I wish I'd never lost sight of her." She pondered a moment. "Is the boy still serving Mass at St. Mary's, Dan?" she said then.

"Sure," said Jim. For Dan was absorbed in the task of restoring Alanna's ruffled feelings by inserting a lighted match into his mouth.

"Well, that's good," pursued their mother. "You bring him home to breakfast after Mass any day this week, Jim. And, Tess, you must bring the little girl in, after school. Tell her I knew her dear mother." Mrs. Costello's eyes, as she returned placidly to the task of labelling jars upon shining jars of marmalade, shone with their most radiant expression.

Marg'ret and Joe Hammond were constant visitors in the big Costello house after that. Their father was away, looking for work,

Mrs. Costello imagined and feared, and they were living with some vague "lady across the hall." So the Mayor's wife had free rein, and she used it. When Marg'ret got one of her shapeless, leaky shoes cut in the Costello barn she was promptly presented with shining new ones, "the way I could n't let you get a cold and die on your father, Marg'ret dear!" said Mrs. Costello. The twins' outgrown suits were found to fit Joe Hammond to perfection, "and a lucky thing I thought of it, Joe, before I sent them off to my sister's children in Chicago!" observed the Mayor's wife. The Mayor himself heaped his little guests' plates with the choicest of everything on the table, when the Hammonds stayed to dinner. Marg'ret frequently came home between Teresa and Alanna to lunch, and when Joe breakfasted after Mass with Danny and Jim, Mrs. Costello packed his lunch with theirs, exulting in the chance. The children became fast friends, and indeed it would have been hard to find better playfellows for the young Costellos, their mother often thought, than the clever, appreciative little Hammonds.

Meantime, the rehearsals for Mother Superior's Golden Jubilee proceeded steadily, and Marg'ret, Teresa, and Alanna could talk of nothing else. The delightful irregularity of lessons, the enchanting confusion of rehearsals, the costumes, program, and decorations, were food for endless chatter. Alanna, because Marg'ret was so genuinely fond of her, lived in the seventh heaven of bliss, trotting about with the bigger girls, joining in their plans, and running their errands. The "grandchildren" were to have a play, entitled "By Nero's Command," in which both Teresa and Marg'ret sustained prominent parts, and even Alanna was allotted one line to speak. It became an ordinary thing, in the Costello house, to hear the little girl earnestly repeating this line to herself at quiet moments, "The lions,—oh, the lions!" Teresa and Marg'ret, in their turn, frequently rehearsed a heroic dialogue which began with the stately line, uttered by Marg'ret in the person of a Roman princess: "My slave, why art always so happy at thy menial work?"

One day Mrs. Costello called the three girls to her sewing-room, where a brisk young woman was smoothing lengths of snowy lawn on the long table.

"These are your dresses, girls," said the matron. "Let Miss Curry get the len'ths and neck-measures. And look, here's the embroidery I got. Won't that make up pretty? The waists will be all insertion, pretty near."

"Me, too?" said Marg'ret Hammond, catching a rapturous breath.

"You, too," answered Mrs. Costello in her most matter-of-fact tone. "You see, you three will be the very centre of the group, and it'll look very nice, your all being dressed the same—why, Marg'ret dear!" she broke off suddenly. For Marg'ret, standing beside her

chair, had dropped her head on Mrs. Costello's shoulder and was crying.

"I worried so about my dress," said she shakily, wiping her eyes on the soft sleeve of Mrs. Costello's shirt-waist; when a great deal of patting, and much smothering from the arms of Teresa and Alanna, had almost restored her equilibrium, "and Joe worried too! I could n't write and bother my father. And only this morning I was thinking that I might have to write and tell Sister Rose that I could n't be in the exhibition, after all!"

"Well, there, now, you silly girl! You see how much good worrying does," said Mrs. Costello, but her own eyes were wet.

"The worst of it was," said Marg'ret, red-cheeked but brave, "that I did n't want any one to think my father would n't give it to me. For you know"—the generous little explanation tugged at Mrs. Costello's heart—"you know he would if he *could*!"

"Well, of course he would!" assented that lady, giving the loyal little daughter a kiss before the delightful business of fitting and measuring began. The new dresses promised to be the prettiest of their kind, and harmony and happiness reigned in the sewing-room.

But it was only a day later that Teresa and Alanna returned from school with faces filled with expressions of utter woe. Indignant, protesting, tearful, they burst forth the instant they reached their mother's sympathetic presence with the bitter tale of the day's happenings. Marg'ret Hammond's father had come home again, it appeared, and he was awfully, awfully cross with Marg'ret and Joe. They were n't to come to the Costellos' any more, or he'd whip them. And Marg'ret had been crying, and *they* had been crying, and Sister did n't know what was the matter, and they could n't tell her, and the rehearsal was no *fun*!

While their feeling was still at its height, Dan and Jimmy came in, equally roused by their enforced estrangement from Joe Hammond. Mrs. Costello was almost as much distressed as the children, and excited and mutinous argument held the Costello dinner-table that night. The Mayor, his wife noticed, paid very close attention to the conversation, but he did not allude to it until they were alone.

"So Hammond'll take no favors from me, Mollie?"

"I suppose that's it, Frank. Perhaps he's been nursing a grudge all these weeks. But it's cruel hard on the children. From his comin' back this way, I don't doubt he's out of work, and where Marg'ret'll get her white dress from now, I don't know!"

"Well, if he don't provide it, Tess'll recite the salutation," said the Mayor, with a great air of philosophy. But a second later he added, "You could n't have it finished up, now, and send it to the child on the chance?"

His wife shook her head despondently, and for several days went about with a little worried look in her bright eyes, and a constant dread of the news that Marg'ret Hammond had dropped out of the exhibition. Marg'ret was sad, the little girls said, and evidently missing them as they missed her, but up to the very night of the dress-rehearsal she gave no sign of worry on the subject of a white dress.

Mrs. Costello had offered her immense parlors for the last rehearsal of the chief performers in the plays and tableaux, realizing that even the most obligingly blind of Mother Superiors could not appear to ignore the gathering of some fifty girls in their gala dresses in the convent hall, for this purpose. Alanna and Teresa were gloriously excited over the prospect, and flitted about the empty rooms on the evening appointed, buzzing like eager bees.

Presently a few of the nuns arrived, escorting a score of little girls, and briskly ready for an evening of serious work. Then some of the older girls, carrying their musical instruments, came in laughing. Laughter and talk began to make the big house hum, the nuns ruling the confusion, gathering girls into groups, suppressing the hilarity that would break out over and over again, and anxious to clear a corner and begin the actual work. A tall girl, leaning on the piano, scribbled a crude program, murmuring to the alert-faced nun beside her as she wrote:

"Yes, Sister, and then the mandolins and guitars; yes, Sister, and then Mary Cudahy's recitation; yes, Sister. Is that too near Loretta's song? All right, Sister, the French play can go in between, and then Loretta. Yes, Sister."

"Of course Marg'ret'll come, Tess,—or has she come?" said Mrs. Costello, who was hastily clearing a table in the family sitting-room upstairs, because it was needed for the stage setting. Teresa, who had just joined her mother, was breathless.

"Mother! Something awful has happened!"

Mrs. Costello carefully transferred to the book-case the lamp she had just lifted, dusted her hands together, and turned eyes full of sympathetic interest upon her oldest daughter,—Teresa's tragedies were very apt to be of the spirit, and had not the sensational urgency of alarms from the boys or Alanna.

"What is it then, darlin'?" said she.

"Oh, it's Marg'ret, Mother!" Teresa clasped her hands in an ecstasy of apprehension. "Oh, Mother, can't you *make* her take that white dress?"

Mrs. Costello sat down heavily, her kind eyes full of regret.

"What more can I do, Tess?" Then, with a grave headshake, "She's told Sister Rose she has to drop out?"

"Oh, no, Mother!" Teresa said distressfully. "It's worse than that! She's here, and she's rehearsing, and what *do* you think she's wearing for an exhibition dress?"

"Well, how would I know, Tess, with you doing nothing but be-moaning and bewildering me?" asked her mother, with a sort of resigned despair. "Don't go round and round it, dovey; what is it at all?"

"It's a white dress," said Teresa desperately, "and of course it's pretty, and at first I could n't think where I'd seen it before, and I don't believe any of the other girls did. But they will! And I don't know what Sister will say! She's wearing Joe Hammond's surplice, yes, but she *is*, Mother!—it's as long as a dress, you know, and with a blue sash, and all! It's one of the lace ones, that Mrs. Deane gave all the altar-boys a year ago, don't you remember? Don't you remember she made almost all of them too small?"

Mrs. Costello sat in stunned silence.

"I never heard the like!" said she presently. Teresa's fears awakened anew.

"Oh, will Sister let her wear it, do you think, Mother?"

"Well, I don't know, Tess." Mrs. Costello was plainly at a loss. "Whatever could have made her think of it,—the poor child! I'm afraid it'll make talk," she added after a moment's troubled silence, "and I don't know what to do! I wish," finished she, half to herself, "that I could get hold of her father for about one minute. I'd——"

"What would you do?" demanded Teresa eagerly, in utter faith.

"Well, I could n't do anything!" said her mother, with her wholesome laugh. "Come, Tess," she added briskly, "we'll go down. Don't worry, dear; we'll find some way out of it for Marg'ret."

She entered the parlors with her usual genial smile a few minutes later, and the flow of conversation that never failed her.

"Mary, you'd ought always to wear that Greek-lookin' dress," said Mrs. Costello, *en passant*. "Sister, if you don't want me in any of the dances, I'll take meself out of your way! No, indeed, the Mayor won't be annoyed by anything, girls, so go ahead with your duets, for he's taken the boys off to the Orpheum an hour ago, the way they could n't be at their tricks upsettin' everything!" And presently she laid her hand on Marg'ret Hammond's shoulder. "Are they workin' you too hard, Marg'ret?"

Marg'ret's answer was smiling and ready, but Mrs. Costello read more truthfully the color on the little face, and the distress in the bright eyes raised to hers, and sighed as she found a big chair and settled herself contentedly to watch and listen.

Marg'ret was wearing Joe's surplice, there was no doubt of that.

But, Mrs. Costello wondered, how many of the nuns and girls had noticed it? She looked shrewdly from one group to another, studying the different faces, and worried herself with the fancy that certain undertones and quick glances *were* commenting upon the dress. It was a relief when Marg'ret slipped out of it, and with the other girls, assumed the Greek costume she was to wear in the play. The Mayor's wife, automatically replacing the drawing-string in a cream-colored toga lavishly trimmed with gold paper-braid, welcomed the little respite from her close watching.

"By Nero's Command" was presently in full swing, and the room echoed to stately phrases and glorious sentiments, in the high-pitched clear voices of the small performers. Several minutes of these made all the more startling a normal tone, Marg'ret Hammond's every-day voice, saying sharply in a silence:

"Well, then, why don't you *say* it?"

There was an instant hush. And then another voice, that of a girl named Beatrice Garvey, answered sullenly and loudly:

"I *will* say it, if you want me to!"

The words were followed by a shocked silence. Every one turned to see the two small girls in the centre of the improvised stage, the other performers drawing back instinctively. Mrs. Costello caught her breath, and half rose from her chair. She had heard, as all the girls knew, that Beatrice did not like Marg'ret, and resented the prominence that Marg'ret had been given in the play. She guessed, with a quickening pulse, what Beatrice had said.

"What is the trouble, girls?" said Sister Rose's clear voice severely.

Marg'ret, crimson-cheeked, breathing hard, faced the room defiantly. She was a gallant and pathetic little figure in her blue draperies. The other child was plainly frightened at the result of the quarrel.

"Beatrice——?" said the nun unyieldingly.

"She said I was a thief!" said Marg'ret chokingly, as Beatrice did not answer.

There was a general horrified gasp, the nun's own voice when she spoke again was angry and quick.

"Beatrice, did you say that to Marg'ret?"

"I said—I said——" Beatrice was frightened, but aggrieved too. "I said I thought it was wrong to wear a surplice, that was made to wear on the altar, as an exhibition dress, and Marg'ret said, 'Why?' and I said because I thought it was—something I would n't say, and Marg'ret said, did I mean stealing, and I said, well, yes, I did, and then Marg'ret said right out, 'Well, if you think I'm a thief, why don't you say so?'"

Nobody stirred. The case had reached the open court, and no little girl present could have given a verdict to save her little soul.

"But—but——" the nun was bewildered, "but whoever did wear a surplice for an exhibition dress? I never heard of such a thing!" Something in the silence was suddenly significant. She turned her gaze from the room, where it had been seeking intelligence from the other nuns and the older girls, and looked back at the stage.

Marg'ret Hammond had dropped her proud little head, and her eyes were hidden by the tangle of soft dark hair. Had Sister Rose needed further evidence, the shocked faces all about would have supplied it.

"Marg'ret," she said, "were you going to wear Joe's surplice?"

Marg'ret did not answer.

"I'm sure, Sister, I did n't mean——" stammered Beatrice. Her voice died out uncomfortably.

"Why were you going to do that, Marg'ret?" pursued the nun, quite at a loss.

Again Marg'ret did not answer.

But Alanna Costello, who had worked her way from a scandalized crowd of little girls to Marg'ret's side, and who stood now with her small face one blaze of indignation, and her small person fairly vibrating with the violence of her breathing, spoke out suddenly. Her brave little voice rang through the room.

"Well—well——" stammered Alanna eagerly, "that's not a bad thing to do! Me and Marg'ret were both going to do it, were n't we, Marg'ret? We did n't think it would be bad to wear our own brothers' surplices, did we, Marg'ret? I was going to ask my mother if we could n't. Joe's is too little for him, and Leo's would be just right for me, and they're white and pretty——" She hesitated a second, her loyal little hand clasping Marg'ret's tight, her eyes ranging the room bravely. She met her mother's look, and gained fresh impetus from what she saw there. "And *Mother* would n't have minded, would you, Mother?" she finished triumphantly.

Every one wheeled to face Mrs. Costello, whose look, as she rose, was all indulgent.

"Well, Sister, I don't see why they should n't," began her comfortable voice. The tension over the room snapped at the sound of it like a cut string. "After all," she pursued, now joining the heart of the group, "a surplice is a thing you make in the house like any other dress, and you know what girls are about the things their brothers wear, especially if they love them! Why," said Mrs. Costello, with a delightful smile that embraced the room, "there never were sisters more devoted than Marg'ret and my Alanna! However"—and now a business-like tone crept in—"however, Sister dear, if

you or Mother Superior has the slightest objection in the world, why, that's enough for us all, is n't it, girls? We'll leave it to you, Sister. You're the one to judge." In the look the two women exchanged, they reached a perfect understanding.

"I think it's very lovely," said Sister Rose calmly, "to think of a little girl so devoted to her brother as Margaret is. I could ask Superior, of course, Mary," she added to Mrs. Costello, "but I know she would feel that whatever you decide is quite right. So that's settled, is n't it, girls?"

"Yes, Sister," said a dozen relieved voices, the speakers glad to chorus assent whether the situation in the least concerned them or not. Teresa and some of the other girls had gathered about Marg'ret, and a soothing purr of conversation surrounded them. Mrs. Costello lingered for a few satisfied moments, and then returned to her chair.

"Come now, girls, hurry!" said Sister Rose. "Take your places, and let this be a lesson to us not to judge too hastily and uncharitably. Where were we? Oh, yes, we'll go back to where Grace comes in and says to Teresa, 'Here, even in the Emperor's very palace, dost dare . . . ? Come, Grace!'"

"I knew, if we all prayed about it, your father'd let you!" exulted Teresa, the following afternoon, when Marg'ret Hammond was about to run down the wide steps of the Costello house, in the gathering dusk. The Mayor came into the entrance hall, his coat-pocket bulging with papers, and his hat on the back of his head, to find his wife and daughters bidding the guest good-by. He was enthusiastically informed of the happy change of event.

"Father," said Teresa, before fairly freed from his arms and his kiss, "Marg'ret's father said she could have her white dress, and Marg'ret came home with us after rehearsal, and we've been having such *fun*!"

"And Marg'ret's father sent you a nice message, Frank," said his wife significantly.

"Well, that's fine. Your father and I had a good talk to-day, Marg'ret," said the Mayor cordially. "I had to be down by the bridge, and I hunted him up. He'll tell you about it. He's going to lend me a hand at the shop, the way I won't be so busy. 'Tis an awful thing when a man loses his wife," he added soberly a moment later, as they watched the little figure run down the darkening street.

"But now we're all good friends again, are n't we, Mother?" said Alanna's buoyant little voice. Her mother tipped her face up and kissed her.

"You're a good friend,—that I know, Alanna!" said she.

THE CURTAIN

By J. J. Bel.

I.

"IT is certainly an amazing collection of photographs," said the visitor, and closed the portfolio with something like a sigh of relief. "As studies of human emotions as reflected on the human countenance, they are, I should imagine, unique. But I must confess that some of them were almost too much for me. Candidly, I don't know how you had the nerve—or the heart—to take some of them. The lunatic laughing, for instance—ugh! And yet that was less horrible than the woman weeping."

"They are equally true to life," said the Professor, with a quiet smile on his thin lips. He rubbed his hands, making a dryish sound. "Equally true to life!" He bent forward and stirred the fire, for the night was cold. "Some of these photographs cost me considerable sums of money," he continued; "but I grudge nothing in the interests of truth. The thing has grown on me, I admit—fascinated me, if you like. Long ago you used to say, or, at any rate, suggest, that I could take nothing really seriously. Now you will perhaps allow that——"

"Oh, willingly!" said the visitor. "I apologized in spirit twenty-five years ago, when the Canadian papers reported your appointment to the Chair of Physical Chemistry in——"

"You need not have apologized in such a hurry, my friend. I resigned after a couple of years—when my aunt left me her little fortune. They still call me 'Professor'—why, I don't know. No; I never took anything seriously until seven or eight years ago, when I took up this—shall we call it hobby? But you can apologize now, if you like. What I have shown you to-night is by no means a proper sample of my work. I have some fine studies of children's expressions while at play; also some excellent example of epileptics. Then, during my trip to Patagonia, I was so fortunate as to witness the torturing of a——"

"Man, man! How could you do it?" cried the visitor. "I've been through the Wiertz Gallery in Brussels——"

"Wiertz had great imagination. I have merely great patience. All the same, I believe Wiertz would have found inspiration in certain of my studies. There is one I should like to show you—the face of a man who fell from a great height. I had difficulty in securing a negative. It is not repulsive—rather expectant in expression—"

"No, no; no more to-night, Drack, if you please. Indeed, it's time I was off."

"Help yourself first." The Professor drew some lithia from a siphon.

The visitor took brandy, because he was feeling a little sick.

"By the way," Drack resumed, after a slight pause, "you are the first person who has seen my photographs. I do not say I have honored you, but I have distinguished you. No other person shall see them during my lifetime. Afterwards—well, given a few more years, I shall leave my own monument. I have always had a great regard for you, Wilson. You did not rag me at school, and you stood by me at college. I am sorry we discovered each other again only on the eve of your return to Canada. It was good of you to give me this evening. I wonder if we shall ever meet again."

"I'll be home in two years. But you should take a trip over to see me. You'd be right welcome. It would blow away morbid ideas and all that, you know." Wilson laughed, but not freely. "Think over it, Drack; and bring your camera, too—if you want some healthy snapshots."

"My dear fellow, you were always smart, but this time you've flown off with the wrong idea. I am not devoted to the more unhappy expressions of the human countenance—as you would admit, were I to show you my entire collection—but I confess they appeal to me by reason of the difficulty, not to mention the risk, of securing them. It is quite possible that a negative may yet cost me my life. But your adjective 'morbid' is quite out of place, apart from being commonplace. I simply want to make a collection of examples of every conceivable human emotion as betrayed by the human countenance. And, as I said, I do not exhibit the results. As regards the photographs which I have taken of you"—

"Of me!"

"—I promise to destroy prints as well as negatives after I have analyzed them. Yes, I took you while you were examining the contents of that portfolio. Didn't you notice how I turned on the lights? I took you five times. I fancy the most interesting negative will be obtained from the plate exposed while you were looking at the weeping woman. Your expression was one, to put it conventionally, of mingled emotions. I shall analyze it, and let you know the percentages of pity, anger, disgust, et cetera."

"But how?"

"The clock on the mantelpiece contains a camera, electrically controlled from a point on the arm of the chair I am sitting in. You can, of course, rise up and destroy the clock, but I beg you to spare it. You have the promise that none save myself shall handle the negatives. Besides, I am trusting you."

Wilson, dropping his eyes, helped himself to a little more brandy.

"Hardly fair," he said slowly. "I wonder how you got some of the photos you show me. . . . No, no! I don't want to know."

"I don't want to tell you," said Drack quietly. "But I don't want you to go off to Canada with any grudge against me." He rose and went to the mantelpiece. "Look!" He opened the side of the clock and withdrew a roll of film. "So much for the face of my friend!" He tossed it into the fire, which devoured it speedily.

"Thanks," said Wilson, with an uncertain laugh. "But I would have trusted you, Drack."

"Oh, it does n't matter," replied the Professor. "I want to be able to come to see you in your healthy Canadian home, with a clear conscience."

"Then you will come?"

"I will come—as soon as I have added one to my collection. . . . But I do not know when that may be. It's an extraordinary thing—the world is full of terror, yet thus far I've never been able to secure what you would call a terror-stricken expression—a face speaking pure, abject terror."

"Oh, stop it, man! You'll get it from me if you go on talking like that."

"But have you ever seen one? Could you describe it? Take, for instance, the case of a man who has made a bet that he will spend the night in a room reputed to be haunted—the case of a man who suddenly sees, or imagines he sees, the thing he declared impossible. Now, what—"

Wilson got up and drained his glass.

"You're the same old Drack," he said, "and yet now you give me the creeps. Hang it, man! Drop all this and sail with me on Saturday. Let me book a berth for you, first thing in the morning. What do you say?"

Drack shook his head, smiling kindly—more kindly than he usually smiled.

"I'll come as soon as I've caught and developed the Terror, Wilson. I've a plan for its capture in my mind now. It came a minute ago! I'll come to you then. If I don't come soon, you'll understand that—er—something has gone wrong. But I must capture it—I *will* capture it! . . . Must you go?"

"It's half past one. I can't stand late hours. I expect that is what has got on my nerves. Sorry if I've been rude, old man."

"Oh, that's all right," the Professor replied absently. "I'll 'phone for a cab."

"Thanks, I'll walk. Perhaps it's your excellent brandy, perhaps it's your equally excellent conversation, Drack—but there's something that wants to be walked off before I sleep to-night."

Having bade his guest good-night, Professor Drack returned to his study, and halted on the hearth-rug, gazing at the clock.

"Pity," he muttered, "a great pity! His composite expression of pain and disgust was worth having. But I can get that elsewhere. . . . Now, that thought—that idea—that—why, it was an inspiration!" He dropped into a chair. "I've got it! By God, I've got it! I'll capture Terror yet!"

II.

THE taximeter indicated five shillings and fourpence when Professor Drack called through the tube. "House on the left—stop there."

"Thenk Gawd!" muttered the driver, for the night was black and bitter. "'Ouse is shut, sir," he added, as Drack opened the cab door and alighted. "Looks as if it 'ad been shut for a century, sir. Cold night, sir. 'Ope you'll find——"

"Thanks!" said Drack briefly. "It's a night for keeping the mouth shut, my friend." He turned to the interior of the cab.

"Here we are, Captain Inglis," he said cheerfully.

"Where?" came the drowsy question.

"Somewhere beyond the radius." Drack laughed and, lowering his voice, continued:

"It's not too late to change your mind, Captain. Say the word, and we'll drive back to town now."

A laugh came from the cab. "My dear chap, I'm going to interview the ghost to-night—or may I go to—sleep. Should n't wonder if I do the latter. Eh?"

"'Sh! Quietly, man!" whispered Drack, gripping the elbow of the tall, heavily-built man who came not quite steadily from the cab.

Captain Inglis stared about him with eyes rather glazed. "I say, where are we?" he asked.

"At our destination."

"Are there no other houses?"

"It's a dark night. You'd see others in daylight, at no great distance." Drack took a key from his pocket, and pointed to a large iron gate. "See if you can unlock it, Captain," he said, handing over the key, "while I instruct the chauffeur."

The Captain stepped stiffly to the gate—some half-dozen paces.

Drack turned to the driver. Handing him a half-sovereign, he said: "Wait for ten minutes—no more. If we don't return in that time, we shall be spending the night here. If we decide to stay before the ten minutes are up, I shall close the front door loudly, and you can take that as your dismissal. Understand?" He looked steadily at the man. "I wired my servant to have the house ready, but it is possible he may not have received my wire, as he was on holiday."

"Very good, sir. . . . The gate seems to be locked, sir. Looks as if——"

"My servant had only the key of the back entrance. Now, you understand that you are to wait for ten minutes, unless you hear the door bang?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then—in case we do not require you further—good-night."

"Good-night, sir," said the man, putting the coin in his pocket carefully. "I understand." But, as a matter of fact, he was wondering. He had once been involved in a murder case, and nowadays it took little to raise his suspicions.

Professor Drack was already beside the Captain.

"Sorry I gave you the wrong key," he said softly. "Allow me."

Inglis stood aside, chuckling. "I was blaming that last brandy and soda," he remarked. "Now you've done the trick, Mr.— Excuse me, but I've forgotten your name." The gate opened.

"Come along," said Drack. "Take my arm. The avenue is very dark."

"You seem to know the way, old cock," the Captain observed.

"I've been here several times in daylight. Sure you would n't like to go back?"

"Rot! . . . Fifty pounds, you said—was n't it?"

"Yes. Twenty-five when I leave you to-night; twenty-five when I call for you in the morning. As a matter of fact, I'll make it fifty in the morning, if you can then swear that nothing—er—troubled you."

"Guess I'll earn the fifty. Gad! That would just help me over the stile. I say! It was funny, our meeting to-night, was n't it?—in that old restaurant, where I was bluing my last sov!" Inglis became garrulous over the recollection. "And," he concluded, "the whole thing means that you want to buy this house, provided you're satisfied that there's no ghost, or whatever the thing is?"

"Precisely. And, as I explained to you, I'm too nervous to make the experiment myself. I chose you, Captain Inglis, because you appeared to me, after considerable search, to be a man without nerves"—

"Devil a nerve," said the Captain cheerfully.

—"And without imagination."

"Never was bothered that way. . . . I fancy you'll buy the house, old cock. Has it a wine-cellar attached?"

"I'm afraid not. . . . Mind the steps, Captain Inglis."

They had come to the house, a square, old-fashioned building, with shuttered windows. In the dark it loomed above them like a precipice.

Drack guided his companion up the broad steps, and inserted a key in the door, which opened easily.

"Go in." He put the door to behind them without closing it.

The next moment the hall was ablaze.

"Gad! This is civilized enough!" cried the Captain. "Electric light and fully furnished!"

"I arranged for the light. As for the furniture, the previous owner, and all connected with him, left in a hurry. Come this way, please."

Drack crossed the hall, and opened a door on the left. Putting in his hand, he touched a switch, and beckoned the other to follow him. He entered the room.

For an instant Inglis halted in the doorway.

"—queer place," he said, looking up and down and about him. Then he laughed and followed the Professor.

"I'm sorry I could not arrange for a fire," said Drack, leaning against the mantelpiece of white marble. "But you'll find rugs on the couch there. Sorry, too, there's only one light available"—he nodded towards a metal-shaded reading-lamp fixed to a small table beside an easy-chair—"but you'll find illustrated papers and some books on the under shelf, in case you can't sleep."

Inglis was still staring about him. "—queer place," he said again.

Drack went over to the small table. He opened a paper packet, and a stream of sovereigns tinkled into the lamp-light.

"Perhaps you would prefer to return to town with me. The cab is waiting."

"And fifty in the morning?" said Inglis, eyeing the gold.

"Fifty in the morning—certainly."

"All right," said the Captain. "When shall you call for me?"

"Seven o'clock?—six? Say six? Very good."

"You don't happen to have a drink on the premises, old cock?"

"Sorry to be inhospitable, but I did n't think of that."

The Captain looked disappointed.

"By the way," said Drack, "how old are you?"

"Thirty-two."

"Heart all right?"

"What d' you mean?—oh, of course, it's sound enough. Trying to scare me—eh? Guess this — queer place would scare some fellows. What——" Captain Inglis was a trifle fuddled, and the numerous questions he was fain to ask became tangled. But he got out one distinctly.

"What's behind?" he asked, pointing at a curtain, or rather pair of curtains, closely drawn, that stretched right across the room, a dozen feet from where he stood.

"This is a long room, and the curtains divide it," was the reply.

"Yes; but what's behind?"

"That," said Drack, holding out his hand, "is—so I believe—just what the previous owner wanted to know. Perhaps he did learn, but unfortunately he was unable to tell anything."

"You mean——"

"I must get back to town, Captain Inglis. It is almost midnight. I wish you a good-night."

Inglis gave his hand a little unwillingly.

"I could have done with a drink," he said sulkily. "Why is everything here black and white?"

"As I have said, the previous owner was unable to tell anything. There is still time for you to change your mind, Captain Inglis." Drack spoke from the doorway.

"Oh, —— it! Beg pardon, old cock—good-night." The Captain was fingering the gold. "But you might bring a flask in the morning."

"I'll do so," said Drack, and went out, closing the door softly.

Inglis, his eyes on the sovereigns, stood listening. He heard nothing from the hall, which he had noticed was covered with heavy rugs, but presently the front door clanged noisily, and a minute later came, faintly, the sound of a motor. "Old what's-his-name must have sprinted down the avenue," he reflected, and proceeded to pocket the coins.

That done, he procured a rug from the couch and, wrapping it round his legs, seated himself in the easy chair. He filled and lit his pipe and took up an illustrated paper. But soon the pipe went out and the paper slipped from his knees.

"A —— queer place," he said once more. "Guess the previous proprietor was dotty."

It was rather a queer place. Save for the blank walls, mantel-piece, and ceiling, which were dead white, everything was a dead black—carpet, hangings, the few pieces of furniture, and even the rugs. And it was cold. Inglis got up and put a second rug round his shoulders. He was in evening-dress, with a light overcoat. Settling himself in the easy-chair again, he made a bid for sleep.

But he had taken either a drink too many or a drink too few—he declared for the latter—and, though his eyes closed, his brain remained stupidly restless. Ere long the utter silence began to make itself oppressive.

III.

HE made up his mind not to look at his watch, but at the end of several hours, as it seemed, he did so. He stared at it, held it to his ear, and stared again. Ten minutes to one.

"Gad! This is slow work," he muttered with a laugh, which broke off abruptly.

Had the great black curtain moved? . . . Nonsense!

He produced his matches and prepared to relight his pipe, though he was horribly thirsty. The box slipped from his fingers.

Undoubtedly the curtain had moved—moved slightly towards him.

"A draught," he thought. A house like this would be full of draughts. He stooped to recover the scattered matches, but kept his eyes on the curtain. With half a dozen matches in his hand, he sat up and endeavored to remove the shade from the lamp, so that the light might be dispersed through the shadowy space. But the shade was fixed. This annoyed him. He got out of the rugs, rose, and tried the several switches near the door; but, as the old man had said, they were not acting. It then occurred to him to open the door, and let in light from the blazing hall, after doing which he would examine the curtain and see what was behind it.

The door resisted him.

"Had n't thought of that," he said to himself, "but I suppose it was fair enough." After some hesitation, he crossed the thick-piled black carpet to what he took to be a window. The black curtain there he drew aside rather gingerly. Yes; it was a window, right enough, but stoutly shuttered. He tried the shutters, and presently discovered that the cross-bar was padlocked.

"A — queer place," he muttered, returning to the easy-chair, and looking again at his watch. Four minutes to one. As he replaced it in his pocket, he fancied that the great curtain bulged. Sitting straight, he glanced sidelong at the hearth. There were no fire-irons. Ere long he realized that there was nothing in the room available as a weapon—not even a light chair. He wished he had had the wit to provide himself with something in that way. He began to feel that the old man had not treated him fairly in leaving him utterly defenseless. He regretted that he had not taken one drink less—or, rather, one drink more.

Not that he was afraid. . . .

The black curtain bulged quite distinctly.

"Who's there?" he called hoarsely.

A minute later he sniggered. "Curse those draughts! It's infernally cold. Feel as if I were in for influenza." He put his hand to his head and found it wet.

Not that he was afraid. . . .

He picked up one of the tumbled rugs, and let it go again. Something was irritating his left hand. He opened it, and found several vestas sticking to the palm.

"Wits gone wool——"

The curtain again!

He rose to his feet, throwing back his shoulders, and stepped forward a few paces. Perhaps it was some trickery on the old man's part. But no; he would hardly have paid twenty-five pounds. . . .

Inglis halted half-way between the hearth and the curtain. What had the old man said about the previous owner? Did he mean that the previous owner was dead or—what? Inglis wished he had kept wide-awake during the long cab journey. There was much he would have liked to know, but he had been so infernally drowsy and comfortable.

Not that he was afraid. . . .

He stood, swaying ever so slightly, staring at the curtain. He thought as hard as his clouded brain would let him. The point was that he was in a haunted house. That was the point, wasn't it? But, then, he did n't believe in haunted houses. Yet supposing——

Was that a sound behind the curtain? Inglis strained his ears. A chill seemed to ripple over his body. There it was again! What was it? . . . A sort of muffled munching sound, accompanied by low but heavy breathing—was it human? What was it? . . .

Inglis sidled to the door, and twisted and tugged at the handle. Then, with teeth set and fingers working, he stole on tiptoe to the window. He grunted softly as he strove to burst the padlock without creating a noise. He could make nothing of it. Desperate, he looked about him. He was a strong man. By using the couch as a battering-ram, he might break down the door. But the noise. . . . He knew there was something behind the curtain. . . . A dog? . . . Why not peep cautiously? . . . But the sound—there it was again—that was no dog—it was something swinish, something—guzzling. . . .

He would risk the battering-ram. He must get out. He forgot about the fifty pounds in the morning. He must get out now—at once! He left the window. The couch was not far away. He would point the low end at the door, then charge for all he was worth.

At the couch he stopped short. Something was moving behind the curtain. He must keep silent awhile. He faced the curtain, about five feet from it.

Of a sudden, he sniffed involuntarily. What was that smell? What? Raw meat—good God! It *was* raw meat—flesh!

Ere he could step backward, the curtain bulged towards him, and in the same instant the lamp went out.

Then out of the blackness a hot breath puffed in his face.

He screamed.

There was a blinding flash, and Captain Inglis fell heavily.

"All right. Don't be alarmed," said the voice of Professor Drack.

A switch clicked; the place was flooded with light, dimmed somewhat by a cloud of magnesia vapor.

"All right," repeated the Professor cheerfully, leaving his camera and sundry curious-looking pieces of pneumatic apparatus. "All right. Let me help you up. Sorry you tripped. What? Fainted? Well, here we are. Always prepared for emergencies." He knelt down, restoratives in his hands. "This is my own house, you know," he went on foolishly, for he was excited and carried away by the supreme success of his experiment, "and everything was faked—except the negative itself. Now, then, your collar——"

Professor Drack paused abruptly, his countenance the color of ashes.

Two minutes later he rose stiffly to his feet, and stood gazing down at Inglis.

He did not hear the panting of a motor approaching the gate.

"What a pity!" he murmured at last. "What a pity, after so excellent a result!"

NIGHT

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

WHEREFORE should darkness terrify my soul?
Night is the hope of Day, the scabbard deep
Wherein the sword of sunlight fain would creep
After the warring shouts that round us roll.
Dawn hath its glamour, like pearls upon a shoal;
Noon hath its wonder when it climbs the steep
Blue hills of Light; and yet we fall asleep
Afraid sometimes with tears beyond control.

Oh, let the shadows fold us in their wings,
And when one long, unstarlit Night shall come,
Let us not go like poor sheep driven and dumb,
But with a spirit that exultant sings;
For where the darkness trails the desolate sod,
He walks before—Night is the shadow of God.

FLAVIA SWIMS

By Sigmund Spaeth

“**T**O-MORROW,” said Flavia sweetly, “to-morrow morning at eleven o’clock, we will go swimming.”

I bowed a humble and delighted assent. Flavia’s word is law. If she had said in that same sweet voice, “To-morrow we will go into the fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar,” I should have bowed just as humbly. Flavia has what they call “the masterful touch.” I am merely as stubborn as a goat. At least, that’s what Flavia says—in her coldly sarcastic moments. When Flavia is not around, I am sometimes rather proud of my disposition. I consider myself amiable and tractable as regards minor details, but when a principle is involved I am as inflexible as iron. Most men think of themselves in that way, I find.

We were dancing. It was “hop night”—which means, *any* night—at the seaside hotel, the only one of the self-styled “palaces” which was moderately inhabitable. Have you ever been at a hotel “hop” at a dead seaside resort? Do you remember the long bare floor, sandy in spots, where the dear healthy children have trudged over it,—the infinite chairs around the sides,—the square piano in one corner, a relic from the shipwreck of ’89,—the angular lady who can play without looking at the keys, and the tall violin gentleman and the short cornet gentleman who make it an “orchestra,”—and then the droves of feminine “guests,” who try to look happy dancing with one another, but are really waiting impatiently for their turn with one of the three men present?

Flavia dances divinely. Her surroundings evidently make very little difference to her. She seems to get as much enjoyment out of one of those hotel “hops” as she would from the Assembly at home. It was through the “hops” that I really came to know Flavia. Of course I had met her before, rather unconventionally, when I climbed into her break-cart in such ridiculous fashion and stopped her runaway horse. But that did n’t really count. I had discovered since then that Flavia was a most attractive creature,—one of those compact little bodies full of enigmatical impulses, always fascinatingly dressed, and possessing a pair of irresistible eyes and a dimple. I admit that we did n’t always dance peacefully. Somehow, we got into an argument almost every

evening. And, thinking it over later, I never could remember exactly what it was that we had been arguing about. Any way, it made very little difference, and I *don't* like to have people agree with me *always*.

When Flavia said, "To-morrow we will go swimming," the words had a deeper significance than would at first appear. By "swimming" Flavia does n't mean "bathing." She is n't one of those who sit in shuddering delight while the waves crawl up almost to their ankles. Nor does she insist upon having two strong men in her grasp before she ventures into the surf. When Flavia swims, she *swims*. At least, that's what they say. I had n't, up to this time, had an opportunity to observe for myself, but, then, Flavia is so competent that it almost seems as if *anything* would be easy for her.

It was just after Flavia's remark that Jones appeared. Jones is one of those middle-aged men who have never married because they consider themselves so attractive to the fair sex in general that they hate to tie themselves down to any one in particular. I think I hate Jones. But my feelings are probably uncharitable. Possibly I was rude when I said something about Jones to Flavia later. Still, there was no reason why she should turn on me as if I had committed a crime. I had n't realized that they were so intimate. When I told her so, it seemed to make matters worse. Then I grew stubborn and sarcastic myself. Finally I left, as usual, to spend the rest of the evening in the billiard-room. But at the last minute I remembered our swimming engagement. So I sauntered over to the water-cooler with an unconcerned air and said carelessly, "To-morrow at eleven, then, on the beach?"

"As you wish," answered Flavia coldly.

You never can tell just what Flavia wants, so I decided to consider her attitude as encouraging. Next morning, therefore, I turned up at the bathing-beach a little before eleven, and waited. It was one of those clear, hot days when the glare of the white beach is blinding and the ocean stretches invitingly for miles and miles, as if it offered unlimited coolness and refreshment. On such a day it's delicious to stretch out flat on the beach with your face buried in the brown skin of your arms, your nose smelling the dry sand a few inches away, and your fingers and toes lazily digging deeper and deeper into the soft, warm bed. I loafed thus in pure contentment, bathed in the hot rays of the sun, glancing up the beach now and then to see if Flavia had arrived. Suddenly I saw her. But she was not alone. Jones was with her. He was wearing one of those red and white striped bathing-suits which always serve to accentuate the abnormalities of a man's figure. It seems inevitable that men of a certain age, no matter how thin they may be otherwise, should give the impression of having swallowed a watermelon whole, whenever they get into a bathing-suit. I'm *sure* that I hate

Jones. Otherwise I would n't say such things about him. He and Flavia walked up and down the beach, passing within a few yards of me each time. I pretended not to notice them, and continued to bask in the sun like a torpid lizard. Jones was talking volubly and grinning idiotically. At times he gave an elephantine skip, as if to show his irrepressible spirits and the buoyancy of youth. Finally, when they were just opposite me, I heard Flavia say to Jones, "I'll beat you to the raft," and in a moment they were both running toward the surf. But while Jones went lumbering on and plunged headlong into the breakers, Flavia stopped suddenly, turned, and walked toward me with a smile of greeting. I jumped to my feet.

"Well," said Flavia, "are you going to behave yourself this morning?"

I was struck speechless by the suddenness of the move. But my behavior seemed to be satisfactory, for Flavia sat down on the sand. I did the same. "For the last time," said Flavia, "I accept your apologies." I murmured my thanks for being saved the trouble of making them. Then Flavia began to talk. I put in a polite word now and then, but it was hardly necessary. Flavia is a good talker. Moreover, she looks well in a bathing-suit. Her arms are beautifully slender and smooth, and tanned a light brown,—not the muddy color that some girls acquire with so much effort, but a natural shading, like that which spreads over raised biscuits after they have been in the oven almost long enough. That's not a very good simile, but Flavia's arms *are* delicious. The scarlet kerchief bound tightly around her hair brings out the good lines in her face. I had n't realized before that Flavia had rather fine features. So I was glad to have a chance to study them while she talked.

It really was a glorious day. The sun continued to shine joyfully in the heavens. The ocean glittered in its midday splendor. A sail flashed out here and there. Near the shore the rows of bobbing heads kept time to the roll of the waves, while the shrieks of the bathers mingled with the roar of the surf. A little beyond the crowd, Jones was still splashing his way laboriously toward the raft, with what he fondly imagined was the "Australian crawl stroke." Life seemed worth living, after all.

"Let's stop being stupid, and take a swim," said Flavia suddenly. I had almost forgotten our purpose in being on the beach. We strolled down over the gradually hardening sand and entered the water. Flavia is not of the one-toe-at-a-time type of bather. Nor does she follow the "wet-your-head-and-arms-first" conventions. She walked right in, in a business-like fashion, plunged through the first breaker without a moment's hesitation, and then began to swim out with sturdy, overhand, masculine strokes. I swam at her side, and was surprised at the steadiness of her progress.

After we were thoroughly clear of the surf, she began to talk again.

"I always like to get a man to swim with me," she said. "When I am alone Mother hates to have me go out as far as I like."

I made no reply, but pondered. Undoubtedly Flavia was quite able to take care of herself in the water. That, however, did not relieve me of my responsibility in the least. I decided to let her go to what I considered the limit of safety, but then to be very firm, for her own sake. We are already at some distance from the shore.

"I feel as if I'd like to go on this way forever," said Flavia.

"If wishes were sea-horses——" I answered, with a feeble attempt at jocularly.

We paddled on and on. I was astonished at the girl's endurance, yet a trifle apprehensive, nevertheless.

"How far do you like to go out, usually?" I ventured.

"Oh, about three times as far as this," said Flavia carelessly. "We have n't really started yet, have we?"

I glanced back at the far-off beach, but said nothing. There was no denying the enjoyment of that steady motion through the clear green water. We seemed to be in a different element from that which rolled in close to the shore. There was a distinct exhilaration, a joy of possession, in our progress through this unknown world. At times a small gull swooped down near us, its curiosity seeming to overcome its fear of these strange fish. I felt like a Triton out on a trip with his Tritoness, or whatever she would be called. I had to admit, however, that my pleasure was mixed with some apprehensiveness, for I was quite unfamiliar with the currents offshore. Had I been alone, it would have been an interesting experiment. Accompanied by a young and irresponsible girl, it seemed foolhardy. I decided to make a stand.

"Now," said I, in a pleasant but firm tone, "we will swim back."

"Oh, there's lots of time," answered Flavia. "They don't lunch until one at the hotel."

"It is n't a question of time," I answered. "I think we'd better go back."

She stared at me in seeming astonishment.

"Are you *afraid*?" she asked.

"Yes, if you will—for *you*," I answered calmly.

"Oh, I'm all right," she said. "I have often gone out further than this."

"But to-day I am responsible for your safety," I replied, "and you must therefore allow me to use my own judgment in the matter."

I was proud of my calmness. I felt that my words were most impressive, without being in the least terrifying. She would see the justice of my position at once and obey me without question. To my surprise, she became suddenly furious.

"You shall not treat me as if I were a child," she stormed. "I am perfectly able to take care of myself, even if *you* are *not*. I won't be bullied by *anybody*. What right have *you* to give me orders? If you are afraid of the water, why did you bring me out here? I'm not accustomed to go swimming with *cowards* or—or weaklings."

I winced, but made no attempt to interrupt her. She became more unreasonable every minute.

"I always thought you were a gentleman," she flashed, "even in your rudest moments. But now I see that I was mistaken. Did you bring me out here just to insult me? Do you think I have no spirit at all? You will find that I am just as independent as *you* are. I shall swim as far as I please. If you are afraid," she added with a tremendous contempt, "go back, by all means. I don't need you. I can go on by myself, and—and, if *you* need any help, I can pick you up on my way in," she concluded witheringly.

I took it all with apparent calmness, but wrath was in my heart. Then suddenly a brilliant thought struck me. I would take her at her word and pretend to leave her. Then she would be *forced* to follow me in.

"You are right," I said coldly. "I am a coward. I am a weakling. I am afraid of the water. Therefore I shall go in. Good-by."

I turned toward the shore and swam slowly away. Flavia seemed utterly oblivious to my actions, and said not a word. I took a dozen strokes, and began to have misgivings; a dozen more, and my heart failed me. Then, just as I was on the point of turning back, a plaintive little cry sounded behind me.

"I think I have a cramp," came her voice weakly over the water. "I'm afraid I'm going to drown."

I turned in horror, and even as I started toward her the red kerchief disappeared beneath the waves. I did n't have the sensations of a hero by any means. I did n't even remember to say, "Courage, maiden, I will save thee," the way they do in books. I believe I *did* say, "Wait a minute," which, on thinking it over afterward, seemed a peculiarly silly remark to make under the circumstances—so obvious, you know. But my thoughts during those few moments of hard swimming were by no means pleasant. I cursed my folly, first to bring her out so far, and then to leave her to the mercy of the waves. Why had n't I insisted? Why had n't I thought of some less dangerous way to gain my ends? Now it might be too late. Oh, I was a fool, and not fit to be entrusted with the safety of a young girl. Then suddenly her head appeared directly in front of me. I began to say something encouraging, but, before a sentence could escape me, she threw her arms around my neck, and I was caught in that strangling "drowning embrace," of which I had always heard with horror. What was to be done? I tried des-

perately to free myself, but Flavia was strong and was fighting for her life. I remembered the old injunction, "Strike the drowning man a stunning blow on the temple, and he will offer no further resistance." But, in spite of the desperate situation, I could n't make up my mind to hit a woman. It seemed so brutal. I tried to reason with her.

"My dear Miss Fanning——" I began.

"Save me, save me!" she murmured, and then the water closed over our heads.

I have often read of a drowning man's sensations. His whole life, they say, flashes through his mind, even the minutest details standing out distinctly. That was not my experience. My thoughts were all decidedly trivial. I remember feeling rather relieved, since I *had* to die, to be dying in the company of such an attractive girl. I wondered how soon they would find us, and whether they might bury us in one grave, with a tombstone marked "They died together"—although I had no reason to expect such a privilege. Then I wondered if Flavia would continue to hold on to me even in death, and regretted the embarrassment which her compromising position might cause her. I almost hoped that our bodies would never be washed ashore, and mentally rehearsed various possible comments on our mysterious disappearance. Then suddenly a raging desire to fight for life possessed me. And at that moment Flavia's arms released their grasp, and I shot up, gasping, to the surface. One long breath of delicious air,—then I turned to find Flavia's body floating beside me. She had ceased to struggle, but her color showed that she was still alive. My going down had been providential, for, finding her support failing her, she had instinctively let go. The question now was how to get her ashore. I found that by treading water and supporting her head I could easily keep her afloat. But this was not sufficient. I thought of pulling her by the hair, in the accepted rescue style, but her red kerchief was so neatly fixed and looked so pretty that I hated to disturb it. Besides, you never can tell about a girl's hair nowadays. I soon evolved a means of locomotion, however. I found that, with her head on my left shoulder, I could support her with my left arm and at the same time make good progress by swimming on my back, using my right arm for strokes. Thus we moved steadily along for a time. I was fast regaining my confidence. At this rate, we would soon be within our depth, for I knew that the slope of the beach was very gradual. I decided not to shout for help. It would probably have had no effect in any case, for the beach was entirely deserted now. No one seemed to have watched our proceedings. Moreover, there was no life-boat on the bathing-beach, as it was known to be thoroughly safe. At best, my shouts would only draw attention to our arrival. And I despise publicity. I felt sure that we were comparatively safe now. Flavia's condition did not seem

alarming. She had not been under water long enough to swallow very much. Probably she had merely fainted from the shock.

Man's tenderest emotions are brought out by any situation in which he is compelled to play the protector to womankind. I felt myself growing sentimental. I had forgotten Flavia's anger, her injustice to me, and my own folly. Seeing her face lying there against my shoulder, so innocent, so absolutely dependent upon me, I suddenly realized that I was in love with Flavia, and that I could n't get along without her, even if we fought every day of our lives. The realization was not a shock to me. It was a great joy. I felt as if she were already mine, and that it needed only her awakening to make my happiness complete. In the midst of these tender thoughts, my foot suddenly struck bottom. I breathed a sigh of relief. We were safe at last. And as I stepped forward exultantly, the beautiful eyes opened, and I saw that they were full of tears.

"Please don't go any further," said Flavia. "I have a confession to make."

I was astonished at this sudden recovery. What followed, however, took away my powers of speech.

"You will never forgive me!" she burst out, confusedly. "I played you a mean and cowardly trick. And you have punished me well for it,—I can never look you in the face again.—That was not a real drowning.—I only pretended.—I wanted to see what you would do.—I was furious because you would n't let me have my own way. It was horribly stubborn of me. I knew you were right—but I hate to be forced into *anything*. When you left me, I could n't follow you even though I wanted to.—And I did n't *dare* go on by myself.—So there was nothing left to do except drown.—I did n't think when I did it how dangerous it might be,—or how *you* might feel about it.—And when I had once started, I had to keep on acting the part.—And then you saved me so nicely that—that I really hated to come *to*.—But I knew that I would have to confess sooner or later. I'm not as abandoned a liar as I seem to be. Besides, they would have rolled me on a barrel—and that would be awful."

I smiled at her incoherencies. But before I could speak she burst out again.

"I can never repay you for this. You have taught me the greatest lesson of my life. And you really *did* rescue me. It's the *spirit* of the thing that counts. Don't you see?" she argued excitedly. "The fact that I was pretending makes absolutely no difference. You *would* have saved me just the same if I *had* been drowning—or anybody else—even a two-hundred-and-fifty-pound fat woman."

I glanced at her panting, energetic little body, and was glad that it had not been otherwise.

"You were a real hero," she went on, "especially after I had behaved so horribly. I insulted you terribly. I called you a coward and a weakling. I did n't mean either of them—because you're *not*. You are the bravest man in the world. And I did n't think anybody could be strong enough to pull me all that distance through the water. It was glorious—the way you did it. If I had been *dead*, you could n't have done it better. And I have another confession to make. I told you a lie. I *never* was out so far before in my life.—I should have been frightened if I had n't been with *you*.—But I wanted to make a record. And I could n't *bear* to have you think me weak and timid, just because I was a girl. So I would *never* have stopped of my own accord.—And when you tried to take care of me, I simply grew perverse and stubborn. I'll *never* let myself get into a temper again. But it's too late now. You'll never forgive me. I don't deserve it."

She really seemed to be thoroughly penitent. I felt like a villain at causing so much distress, yet the whole thing was so inexpressibly funny that I could hardly refrain from laughing outright. I managed to keep a straight face, however.

"Miss Fanning," said I seriously, "there is nothing to forgive, I assure you. I am sorry if I made you lose your temper. For the rest, I am really indebted to you for one of the pleasantest mornings of my life."

"And you are not a bit angry at me?" she asked in wonder.

"Why should I be?" I answered. "You have taught me a great many interesting things about swimming this morning—and about acting, too. Do you really mean to tell me that that whole desperate drowning-scene was a deliberate masquerade?"

"I'm afraid it was," she said, smiling. "I have been told that the stage was my real vocation," she added demurely. "Did I frighten you terribly? And did you think I would *never* let go? You did your part beautifully—just the way they do it in the story-books."

We both laughed heartily, and I mentally thanked the fates who had brought this happy ending to our little adventure. We were now very close to the surf. Flavia had regained her equanimity, and was chatting away in her liveliest fashion, as she recalled some of the ludicrous details of the "rescue." I was fascinated by her frank enjoyment of life. And again the feeling swept over me that I could never be happy without her.

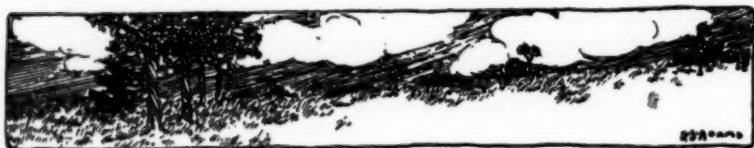
"Flavia," I said suddenly, "I love you. Will you marry me?"

She gazed at me seriously, and I thought I caught for a moment a glitter of new joy in her eyes. But instead of answering, she pointed at a huge wave which was rolling toward us. "We *must* shoot in on this breaker," she said abruptly. Instinctively, I obeyed the suggestion. The wave caught us just as it was curling into foam, and we plunged

forward. Have you ever "shot" a breaker? It is a thrilling sensation. You are carried forward head-first, as you receive the full force of the rolling water. If you keep your hands in front of you and your face down, you are shot ahead in a resistless swirl. The roar of the monster is in your ears. Invisible hands seem to pluck at your body, to tear it in pieces. But finally you glide safely to the very edge of the dry sand, and are left by the receding waters like a dead log cast ashore.

Thus Flavia and I came again to the safety of the beach. The wide-spreading foam, thinning gradually, slowly wandered back to its element, dragging with it countless little pebbles and scurrying sand-crabs. I looked at Flavia, and she looked at me. We lay side by side where the sea had tossed us, I, as the larger, slightly in advance. Flavia measured the distance with her eye. Then she smiled radiantly through a strand of wet hair which had escaped from the scarlet kerchief. She stretched out her hand to me.

"You win, Dick," she said. "We're engaged."



IN THE S. P. C. A. AMBULANCE

BY EMILY SARGENT LEWIS

HOW strange it is to hear the turn of wheels
 And yet to drag no heavy weight behind!
 This touch of hand upon my shoulder feels
 Like my first master, who was sometimes kind.
 I wish that I were not so very blind;
 It may be we are near to fields of grass
 Where horses play, and no one seems to mind,
 In such green meadows as I used to pass.

That last time in the alley when I fell
 I could not rise, however much I tried.
 I thought the whip would end it then. Ah, well,
 Who would have thought that I, at last, should ride?
 I, the old horse who gladly would have died,
 Ride, ride in state, whither I cannot guess;
 No curses, and no blows upon my side—
 When men say "Heaven" they must mean no less.

AMATEURISM IN SPORTS

By Luther Halsey Gulick, M.D.

INTERCOLLEGIATE athletic contests began as merely a convenient means of sport and recreation for a few men whose chief occupations lay in other fields; but they have now come to form an immense, spectacular part of the social, outdoor life of the nation. Frequently over forty thousand people, many of them travelling long distances, have paid large entrance fees to witness a single game. Such contests not only furnish students with a strong incentive to physical development, but also bring publicity and prestige to the colleges themselves, so it is not difficult to understand why enterprising institutions of learning have found it worth while to indulge the cultivation of athletic teams. In order to draw a large crowd of spectators, a team must play a winning game, and to do this it must have expert players. The manner in which the latter are recruited and retained constitutes the province of the present discussion.

As a basis for argument, let us take several concrete cases.

An alumnus of means, who developed a strong interest in athletics during his college course, becomes a patron of the sports and games carried on at the local high school. He functions as an official at the outdoor meets and becomes a contributor of prizes and trophies. His activity leads to his appointment upon athletic boards, and to the taking of a conspicuous part in the management of their affairs. For the boys themselves, he has a genuine personal regard, which goes out to both the studious and the athletic, but it is especially warm toward those who excel in manly sports.

In the course of time the alumnus becomes acquainted with a young man, just finishing the high-school course, who has done well in scholarship and unusually well in athletics. He believes in the boy, and his loyalty to alma mater is still keen. He wants the boy to go to his college, but the youth is without the necessary means. Being innocent of a broad understanding of the situation, the alumnus is acting quite laudably when he says, "Go to my college and I will see you through." He believes that he is doing the youth a good turn as

well as his college. The boy goes. This is not a hypothetical, but a real case.

A faculty member with an independent fortune makes a practice of keeping in touch with the desirable boys in certain secondary schools. He likes boys individually, and he has been connected with the athletic organizations of his own beloved university for a generation. Occasionally he learns through some graduate of a youth of good character and excellent standing in athletics who is about to leave the preparatory school, and indirectly he makes it possible for that boy to attend his institution. Thus he maintains in the university several boys of splendid abilities, boys he believes in and who, in their athletic feats, bring great credit to their alma mater.

Take a case still further over the line—that of the athletic trainer. not a member of the faculty, who has had put into his hands a considerable sum of money for private distribution among needy and ambitious young men who give promise of becoming valuable members on the university teams. It is used in precisely the same way as in the previous case, except that it is definitely understood that these funds are to be expended for athletic purposes only.

Then again there is the case of the student who is working his way through college, and who, on account of his expertness in baseball, is paid to play during summer vacations upon certain teams not connected with the college. Why should he not use his skill to help defray his college expenses? To play baseball professionally, whether in summer or winter, is just as legitimate a way of earning money as the giving of any other form of athletic entertainment. A man should no more be criticised for using his ability as a ball-player to help himself through college than for using his knowledge of Latin or mathematics in pecuniarily profitable tutoring.

The question, however, is, Should a young man who plays baseball for hire, or who is being financially assisted because of his athletic ability, be eligible to represent his institution in intercollegiate athletic contests? Before attempting to answer this question, let us examine briefly the history of the rise and fall of the old Olympic games.

These ancient sports had their origin in the informal coming together of a group of gentlemen to compete, for the sake of mutual pleasure, in trials of bodily agility and endurance. They ran, wrestled, boxed, jumped, and threw the spear. The victor's only material reward was a crown of leaves which were plucked from the wild bushes along the roadside. While the kinds of events and methods of distinguishing the victors varied in accordance with the physical features of the different localities, such in general were the principal characteristics of these Grecian games in the beginning. The men came together solely to have a good time.

Gradually, however, the games developed into great religious festivals, and their popularity became so widespread that huge multitudes were accustomed to assemble whenever they were held. The name of the victor was perpetuated by Pindar in immortal odes, while the greatest sculptors of the time vied with one another in attempts to preserve the beauty of his body in carven stone. A breach was made in the walls of his native city, so that he might enter it as no person had ever entered before. No greater honor was given for any achievement than that awarded to the winner in the Olympic games. The ostensible prize remained a crown of leaves, but the incidental rewards grew to such proportions that the victor in any of those sports was made wealthy for the rest of his days.

The result was that it *paid* to win. Competitors devoted more and more time to the preliminary training, and men who had peculiar physical skill gave up all other business and strove solely for athletic proficiency. Gradually the contestants in the Olympic games came to constitute in the community a special class—well described by Plato—whose members spent their entire time in physical exercises. A private person whose sport was his recreation and not his business had no more chance of competing successfully with these men who, highly endowed to start with, gave their whole time to perfecting their endowment, than a modern gentleman who enjoyed baseball simply as manly pastime would have in playing the game against a professional. Thus the great material rewards which, although nominally incidental, came inevitably to the Olympic winners converted the games from friendly contests among men seeking recreation, to prodigious national spectacles, open only to contestants who could give all their time to preparation for them, and that has been the history of every sport since that time after it once began to give prizes having a monetary value to those who excelled.

To-day a precisely similar effect is produced upon intercollegiate games by keeping track of the promising pupils in the secondary schools and making it worth their while to attend a particular college. Athletes who receive compensation for physical prowess, no matter on how friendly or informal a basis, no matter how pure the feelings of affection and college loyalty that motivated their emolument, must put up a *winning game*. Winning is necessary because their living depends upon success. They must give up everything that interferes with training and fit themselves for the running track or the football gridiron with the same care and diligence that a man prepares for his business. They must make athletics the first thing throughout their college careers.

Under the stimulus of the economic motive, and the influence of the environment which it creates, young men become peculiarly ex-

pert, and the presence of such a group in intercollegiate sports so shuts out the chances of average men that they cease to become candidates for athletic honors. The competition is no longer fair or even. Like the old Greek games, modern college sports have now passed the stage of recreation and reached such an expert development that on the average less than one per cent of the men entering college stand any chance of "making" a varsity team.

The effect of the monetary inducement can be seen from another angle in the secondary school. A boy who makes an exceptionally good performance in either a major or a minor sport is usually approached with a so-called "offer" from a person interested in or connected with some college or university. The father of a Brooklyn boy boasted that his son had received letters from forty-three different educational institutions. He was incomparably the best boy of that locality in his specialty, and from the standpoint of representation on a college team it was a very desirable kind of athletic ability.

These offers are so frequent that boys have come to speak freely about them. A promising foot-ball youth says: "I have offers from ——— and ———, but I'm going to wait and see if ——— won't give me a better one." A sprinter remarks: "I've always wanted to go to college, and it begins to look now as if I could do it in a hundred yards dash." "Baseball is my long suit," says another, "and I see no reason why I should n't pitch my way through college."

To the inexperienced boy, such an offer seems like a perfectly simple, open-and-shut, pay proposition, and he is not to be blamed. But in his mind it has the effect of surrounding college life with a commercial atmosphere. If he plays baseball or football extraordinarily well, the road to professional and social advancement will seem to lie in athletic rather than scholastic proficiency. That is the situation which the secondary schools have to face because of the practices which obtain in college athletics. Conditions are better now than they used to be, perhaps—at least, questionable offers are not now made so openly and directly as they were in the past.

However, let us drop the effect of professionalism upon the individual youth and return to the standpoint of intercollegiate sports. It is entirely right for the loyal alumnus to pay the promising jumper's way through college; it is perfectly proper for students to earn money through vacation baseball or to compete for prizes having a money value; indeed, it is all right for a college to hire the members of its foot-ball and baseball teams; but such athletes and such teams must be publicly recognized as *paid* bodies. Declaration must be made of the fact that the great outdoor spectacles, witnessed, it may be, by ten, twenty, thirty, or forty thousand people, are furnished by professional athletes and promoted by the participating colleges for the

purposes of advertisement or some reason other than the advancement of sport for sport's sake. Being purely commercial propositions, they must be frankly acknowledged as such. But the men who go into athletics for fun and recreation cannot compete in such games, and they will not try to.

Because of this fact, there has gradually arisen in every body devoted to athletics the need of drawing a line, somewhere, for the benefit of the man who plays for sport's sake only. It is this line which forms the ultimate division between amateur and professional athletics. A comparative study recently made of over one hundred constitutions of various athletic bodies showed that in every instance a fundamental distinction was made between the man who plays for fun and the one who does it as a business. Stated thus broadly, it seems an easy distinction to apply, but when it comes to defining exactly what constitutes the "financial returns" which brand a competitor as a professional, serious difficulties are encountered. It is in this vaguely limited region where the irregularities in organized sports abound, but, as absurd and numerous as they unfortunately are, they serve to emphasize the necessity of striving more, instead of less, persistently to secure a precise and practicable definition of professionalism so comprehensive that not one of its innumerable ramifications will be omitted. The rules should be so strictly and minutely drawn that they will immediately reveal the professional status of every one engaged in physical training for profit, even including the person who gives gymnastics to cure a crooked back. But no matter how exactly and fully rules are formulated, they are of no value unless there is some efficient social machine which can secure their enforcement.

The most conspicuous organization engaged in the administration of athletic control is the Amateur Athletic Union. This body does not attempt to exercise supervision over the affairs of any association not connected with it. The organization performs its mission by simply saying to the members of its affiliated organizations that if they wish to compete in games sanctioned by the Amateur Athletic Union they must live up to the rules of clean sport which it has established. If a college, a preparatory school, an industrial association, a church, or a lodge desires to hold athletic sports in which cash prizes are offered and in which professionals are allowed to compete with amateurs, the Amateur Athletic Union has not a word to say, but the individuals competing in such games may not thereafter enter any athletic competitions held under its sanction.

Organizations exercising control over athletics are not needed because of the existence of sports which are promoted by commercial bodies. Professional baseball is work for the players, but recreation for the multitude of spectators, and it is therefore a desirable feature

of our strenuous city life. Those, however, who wish to handle a bat themselves deserve an opportunity to enjoy the exhilarating activities of the diamond, but they will not have it unless there is some means of separating those who play for fun from those who compete for a livelihood. If the invigorating sports of track, field, and river are to be preserved for the enjoyment of ordinary people, as participants and not mere onlookers, they must be saved from monopolization by those whose proficiency has been stimulated by the economic motive.



BELIEF

BY MARY BYERLEY

THERE came a woman singing down the lane:
 Her hair was gray, and yet her voice was young
 As spring's new leaves. About her figure hung
 A tawny garment beautiful and strange.
 And as she neared me her two eyes did seem
 Pupils to pain; yet laughter was her mouth.
 Her hands a distaff held, and only that—
 No thread or twisted strands about it wound.
 And she did sing a melody profound
 To point of weeping. This, in part, her strain:
 "I am Belief—Old Age and Youth in one;
 Proud mother to that Immortality
 Men worship, ere the tree of Life decays;
 My banner is of song, of Hope deferred;
 My garment, invitation to the saints;
 My distaff, thoughts that twist themselves about
 Into a rope of Faith. I may be Truth,—
 I cannot tell; look in these eyes and guess;
 Hear thou my voice, wince at these age-old locks,
 Wear thou my smile." Then did she disappear,
 Leaving me, doubter, skeptic, wonder-sensed,
 Thinking of man and God, of earth and sky,
 Of limitation and the illimitable.
 And as I puzzled, came her voice once more,
 Her banner urging man from out the clod
 To heights beyond: "I am Belief, Belief—
 I may be Truth, and yet I cannot tell."
 All full amazed, bowed I my head to earth
 The while her footsteps pounded in my heart.

SHORT-STORY MASTERPIECES

II. THE POPE'S MULE

By Alphonse Daudet

DONE INTO ENGLISH, AND WITH INTRODUCTION,
BY THE EDITOR

LA MULE DU PAPE

DAUDET

Of all the pretty sayings, proverbs, or adages with which our Provence peasants embroider their discourse, I know none more picturesque or singular than this: within fifteen leagues around about my mill, whenever a person speaks of a spiteful, vindictive man, he says, "That man there—look out for him! He is like the Pope's mule, who kept her kick in waiting for seven years."

I hunted diligently for a long time to find out whence that proverb could have come, what was that papal mule, and that kick reserved throughout seven years. No one here has been able to inform me on this subject, not even Francet Mamaï, my fife player, though he has all the Provençal legends at his fingers' ends. Francet thinks with me that it must be founded upon some old tradition of Provence; yet he has never heard it referred to except in this proverb.

"You will not find that anywhere but in the Library of the Grasshoppers," said the old fifer to me, with a laugh.

The idea struck me as a good one, and since the Library of the Grasshoppers is at my door, I went and shut myself up there for a week.

It is a marvellous library, admirably equipped, open to poets day and night, and attended by little librarians who constantly make music for you with cymbals.

When the gods parceled out their gifts, to Alphonse Daudet fell a rich endowment: a poet's imaginative nature, yet withal a clear vision for realities which is often denied the disciple of verse; a sure dramatic instinct, too, with a contrasting power of repression which checked his slightest tendency toward the florid and the melodramatic; and, coloring all, a native sense of humor so tenderly sympathetic that it prevented his satire from biting with the acid sharpness of which his wit was capable. An all-round, well-poised literary genius was he, efficient in many fields and preëminent in more than one.

There is one word of all the happy many which, in the opinion of all his critics, fitly characterizes Daudet—he possessed charm, charm of manner personally and charm of literary style. I wish his portrait were before us here, that we might trace in that striking countenance the record of those fascinating qualities of mind and heart which are so patent in his life and work.

As for his person, from boyhood his hair grew in that untamed profusion which we so often associate with strong individuality, and even in later life he wore his locks long and full. His beard was silky, and unrestrained rather than unkempt. Near-sighted eyes, peering from behind the inevitable black-rimmed *pince nez*, or perhaps a monocle, seemed curious and inquiring, typifying perfectly the spirit of naïve interest with which he looked out on life to observe its myriad moods and forms. In this look there was something reflective, too, as though he had just noticed a matter of unusual interest, and was inwardly speculating upon its further meanings.

The nose was pleasure-loving, though robust, dignified, and individual—counteracted upon by the satirical mouth, whose sarcasm, in turn, was gently toned by twinkling furrows that flanked his eyes. In later days the sharpness of Daudet's expression of mouth had been almost lost, and a gentle detachment, betokening a just but sympathetic critical spirit, marked his countenance and made it less keen than lovable. Yet it was in those later years that his cherished hatred for the French Academy led to his bitter satirical outburst against that institution in his novel, *The Immortal* (1888). But that was only one phase temporarily dominant in the man whom every one loved and who himself loved all.

Alphonse Daudet was—especially in youth—the exponent of the south, the south as typified by his native Pro-

vence. There I passed some delicious days, and, after a week of research—on my back—I ended by discovering what I wished to know, that is to say, the history of my mule and of that famous kick saved up for seven years. The story is a pretty one, although a trifle naïve, and I am going to try to tell it you just as I read it yesterday morning in a sky-colored manuscript, which smelled delightfully of dry lavender, and had long gossamer threads for tassels.

He who has never seen the Avignon of the time of the Popes, has seen nothing. For gayety, for life, for animation, for a succession of fêtes, there never was a city its equal. From morning till night there were processions and pilgrimages; streets strewn with flowers and hung with rich tapestries; cardinals arriving by the Rhône, banners flying, galleys bedecked with flags; papal soldiers chanting in Latin on the public squares; begging friars with their alms-rattles; then, in addition, from roof to cellar of the houses which swarmed humming around the great papal palace like bees about their hive, there were heard the *tic-tac* of the lace-makers' looms, the flying of the shuttles weaving cloth of gold for vestments, the little hammers of the vase-sculptors, the keyboards being attuned at the lute-makers, the songs of the warpers; and, overhead, the booming of the bells was heard, and always below sounded the tinkle of the tambourines on the river bank by the bridge. For with us, when the people are happy they must be dancing, dancing ever; and since in those days the streets in the city were too narrow for the farandole, fifers and tambourine players took up their post upon the Avignon Bridge, in the cool breezes of the Rhône, and day and night they danced and danced. . . . Ah! happy time, happy city when halberds did not wound, and state prisons were used only for cooling wine! No famine; no wars! That

shows the way the Popes of the Comtat* knew how to govern their people; that is why their people regretted them so deeply!

There was one Pope especially, a good old gentleman whom they called Boniface. Ah! how many tears were shed for him in Avignon when he died! He was such an amiable, affable prince! He would smile down at you so genially from his mule! And when you passed him—whether you were a poor little digger of madder or the grand provost of the city—he would give you his benediction so courteously! A genuine Pope of Yvetot was he, but of an Yvetot in Provence, with something sly in his laughter, a sprig of sweet marjoram in his cap—and not the semblance of a Jeanneton. The only Jeanneton the good Father had ever been known to have was his vineyard—a little vineyard which he had planted himself, three leagues from Avignon, among the myrtles of Château-Neuf.

Every Sunday, on going out from vespers, the worthy man went to pay his court to it, and when he was seated in the grateful sun, his mule close beside him, his cardinals stretched at the foot of the vine stocks all about, then he would order a flagon of wine of his own bottling—that exquisite, ruby-colored wine, which has been called ever since Château-Neuf of the Popes—and he would drink it appreciatively in little sips, and regard his vineyard with a tender air. Then—the flagon empty, the day closed—he would return joyously to the city, followed by all his chapter; and, after crossing the Bridge of Avignon, in the midst of drum-beats and farandoles, his mule, stirred by the music, took up a little skipping amble, while he himself marked the time of the dance with his cap—a thing which greatly scandalized his cardinals, but caused all the people

vence. His was the rich, effusive, impressionable southern nature—abundantly moved upon by all the southern charm and vivacity and naïveté and life, as well as richly gifted in the ability to reproduce those impressions in the pages of his writings. Then what more natural than that he should both personally and in his fiction embody the vivid life of the care-free land. When, in 1869, his first important volume of collected stories appeared, it was seen that into *Letters from My Mill*—which included *The Pope's Mule*—Daudet had poured not only the young unspoiled richness of his own buoyancy, but also the fulness of his feeling for local landscapes, traditions, and characters of town and country. And again and again, even in his later work, Daudet reverts to the scenes of his boyhood life, and gives us pictures—now jocund as the wine of the country, now sad as a poet's wail—whose tone and spirit are of the Provençal life, all delicately set in the atmosphere of that sunny clime.

In the *History of My Books*, which forms an integral part of the author's *Thirty Years in Paris*, he takes us by the hand in his dear, intimate way, and shows us the great white house, the ancient and unique manor of Montauban. Nearby, its shattered wings swaying in the wind on the summit of a little pine-clad mountain, stands *Mon Moulin*—the windmill about whose dusty portals for centuries had gathered the quaint characters of the district, and

*The County of Avignon.

where, now that its traffic was forever departed, the young Alphonse first began to distinguish man from man in the stories told him by the ancients of the province.

"Excellent people, blessed house!" he writes. "How often have I repaired thither in the winter to recuperate in the embrace of nature, to heal myself of Paris and its fevers in the wholesome emanations of our little Provençal hills."

The greetings of old friends at an end, he would whistle to Miracle, a venerable spaniel some fishermen had once found on a bit of wreckage at sea, and climb up to his mill, there to browse and dream and wander in fancy whithersoever the spirits of the place should beckon.

"The mill was a ruin," he says; "a crumbling mass of stone, iron, and ancient boards which had not turned in the wind for many years, and which lay, with broken limbs, as useless as a poet, while all around on the hillside the miller's trade prospered and ground and ground with all its wings. Strange affinities subsist between ourselves and inanimate objects. From the first day, that east-off structure was dear to my heart; I loved it for its desolation, its road overgrown with weeds, those little grayish, fragrant mountain weeds with which Père Gaucher compounded his elixir; for its little worn platform where it was so pleasant to loiter, sheltered from the wind, while a rabbit hurried by, or a long snake, rustling among the leaves with crafty detours, hunted the field mice with

to say, "Ah! that good prince! Ah! that fine old Pope!"

Next to his vineyard at Château-Neuf, the thing that the Pope loved best in the world was his mule. The good old man doted on that beast. Every evening before going to bed he went to see if her stable was well shut, if nothing was lacking in the manger; and he never rose from the table without having had prepared under his very eyes a huge bowl of wine à la Française, with plenty of sugar and spice, which he himself carried to the mule, despite the remarks of his cardinals. It must be admitted, however, that the animal was worth the trouble. She was a beautiful mule, black and dappled with red, glossy of coat, sure of foot, large and full of back, and carrying proudly her neat little head, all decked out with pompons, rosettes, silver bells, and bows of ribbon—all this with the mildness of an angel, a naïve eye, and two long ears, always in motion, which gave her the air of an amiable child. All Avignon respected her, and when she went through the streets there was no attention which she did not receive; for every one knew that this was the best way to be in favor at court, and that, for all her innocent air, the Pope's mule had led more than one to fortune—witness Tistet Védène and his prodigious adventure.

This Tistet Védène was, from the very first, an audacious young rascal whom his father, Guy Védène, the gold-carver, had been obliged to drive from home because he would not do anything, and demoralized the apprentices. For six months he could be seen trailing his jacket through all the gutters of Avignon, but especially around the papal palace, for this rascal had long had his eye fixed on the Pope's mule, and you will see what a villainous scheme it was. One day when his Holiness was taking a walk all alone beneath the shadows of the ramparts with his

steed, behold my Tistet approached and, clasping his hands with an air of admiration, said to him:

"Ah! *mon Dieu!* what a splendid mule you have there, Holy Father! Permit me to look at her a moment. Ah, my Pope, the emperor of Germany has not her equal!"

And he caressed her and spoke softly to her, as to a damsel.

"Come here, my jewel, my treasure, my fine pearl. . . ."

And the good Pope, deeply moved, said to himself:

"What a good little fellow! How gentle he is with my mule!"

And do you know what happened the next day? Tistet Védène exchanged his old yellow jacket for a beautiful vestment of lace, a violet silk hood, and buckled shoes; and he entered the household of the Pope, where never before had any been received but sons of nobles and nephews of cardinals. There is an intrigue for you! But Tistet did not stop there.

Once in the service of the Pope, the rascal continued the game which had succeeded so well. Insolent with every one else, he had nothing but attention, nothing but provident care for the mule; and one was always meeting him about the palace court with a handful of oats or a bunch of clover, whose rosy clusters he shook gently and glanced at the balcony of Saint Peter as if to say: "Ha! for whom is this?" And so it went on until the good Pope, who felt that he was growing old, ended by leaving it to him to watch over the stable and to carry to the mule her bowl of wine *à la Française*—which was no laughing matter for the cardinals.

No more was it for the mule—it did not make her laugh. Now, at the hour for her wine, she always saw coming to her stable five or six little clerks of the household, who hastily buried themselves

which the ruin swarmed. With the creaking of an old building shaken by the north wind, the flapping of its ragged wings like the rigging of a ship at sea, the mill stirred in my poor, restless, nomadic brain memories of journeys by sea, of landings at lighthouses and far-off islands; and the shivering swell all about completed the illusion. I know not whence I derived this taste for wild and desert places which has characterized me from my childhood, and which seems so inconsistent with the exuberance of my nature, unless it be at the same time the physical need of repairing by a fast of words, by abstinence from outeries and gestures, the terrible waste which the southerner makes of his whole being. Be that as it may, I owe a great deal to those places of refuge for the mind; and no one of them has been more salutary in its effect upon me than that old mill in Provence."

Here, both in boyhood and in young manhood's revisitations, Daudet found the "grasshopper's library," and in its secret alcoves discovered such delightful stories as *The Elixir of the Reverend Father Gaucher*, *The Three Low Masses*, *The Goat of Monsieur Seguin*, *Master Cornille's Secret*, and *The Old Folks*, all abounding in naïve character and told with his own delicate charm. Here, too, he learned to take a delight in his craft which waned not with the years; and to find joy in pleasing "the people," who were ever the subjects of his finest delineations.

Born at Nîmes in 1840, and

as a mere lad leaving home for the city of Lyons, Daudet's public career began with his journey to Paris in November, 1857. The boy of seventeen and a half came possessed of a slender collection of poems which, though the product of so youthful a rhymester, met with no little favor. In manner common to those who must win their way along the precarious paths of letters, he pressed on, until in 1859—he being not yet twenty—Daudet published his first volume of poems, *Les Amoureuses*, which won high praise from the critics, but is now sought chiefly by collectors. Thus he began to gain confidence, and others of his works followed almost yearly. The pages of *Le Figaro* were now freely opened to him, and that public by whom he never ceased to be loved began to scan its columns for his fantastic chronicles of Provençal life. In that same journal he began in 1866 to publish his *Letters from My Mill*, which were collected in volume form in 1869, and constituted his first real popular triumph.

The third period in our author's life is marked by the sad experiences of the Siege of Paris, in 1870. Just as his life in the south inspired the *Letters*, so did the grave impressions made by those terrible days in the French capital during the Franco-Prussian War move him to write the little masterpieces which, in part, appeared in the volume entitled *Monday Tales*, published in 1873. Who that has read them can forget the "piercing lathos" of *The Last Class*

in the straw with their hoods and their laces; then, after a moment, a delicious warm odor of caramel and spices filled the stable, and Tistet Védène appeared carefully carrying the bowl of wine à la Française. Then the martyrdom of the poor beast began.

That perfumed wine which she loved so well, which kept her warm, which gave her wings, they had the cruelty to place before her, there in her manger, and let her sniff it; then, when she had her nostrils full of it, it was gone—that lovely rose-flamed liquor all went down the gullets of those good-for-nothings. And yet, if they had only stopped at taking her wine; but they were like devils, all these little clerks, when they had drunken. One pulled her ears, another her tail; Quinquet mounted himself upon her back, Béluguet tried his cap on her, and not one of those little scamps reflected that with a single good kick that excellent beast could have sent them all into the polar star, and even farther. But no! It is no vain thing to be the Pope's mule, the mule of benedictions and indulgences. The children went blithely on, she did not get angry; and it was only against Tistet Védène that she bore malice. But that fellow, for instance, when she felt him behind her, her hoof itched, and truly she had excellent reason. That ne'er-do-well of a Tistet played her such villainous tricks! He had such cruel fancies after drinking!

One day he took it into his head to make her climb up with him into the clock tower, all the way up to the very top of the palace! And it is no myth that I am telling you—two hundred thousand Provençals saw it. Imagine for yourself the terror of that unhappy mule when, after having for a whole hour twisted like a snail blindly up the staircase, and having clambered up I know not how many steps, she found herself all at once on a platform dazzling with

light, and saw, a thousand feet beneath her, a fantastic Avignon: the market booths no larger than walnuts, the papal soldiers before their barracks like red ants, and farther down, over a silver thread, a microscopically little bridge on which the people danced and danced. Ah! poor beast! What panic! At the bray she uttered all the windows of the palace trembled.

"What's the matter? What are they doing to her?" cried the good Pope, and rushed out upon the balcony.

Tistet Védène was already in the courtyard, pretending to weep and tear out his hair.

"Ah! Holy Father, what is the matter? There is your mule. . . . *Mon Dieu!* what will happen to us! Your mule has gone up into the belfry!"

"All by herself?"

"Yes, Holy Father, all by herself. Stay! Look there, up high. Don't you see her ears waving? They look like two swallows."

"Mercy on us!" cried the poor Pope on raising his eyes. "But she must have gone mad! Why, she will kill herself. Will you come down, you unhappy creature!"

Pécaïre! She could have asked nothing better than to come down; but how? The stairs—they were not to be thought of: one could mount those things, but as to coming down, one could break one's legs a hundred times. And the poor mule was disconsolate; but as she roamed about the platform with her great eyes filled with vertigo she thought of Tistet Védène.

"Ah, bandit, if I escape—what a kick to-morrow morning!"

That idea of a kick restored a little courage to her heart; except for that she could not have held out. At last they succeeded in getting her down, but it was not an easy affair. They had to lower her in a litter, with ropes and

and *The Siege of Berlin!* Not only are these human episodes of singularly tender appeal, but they are masterpieces of form, unsurpassed among short-stories of any language. As Daudet's best work, they deserve further notice here.

At the close of the Franco-Prussian War, Alsace and Lorraine were ceded to Germany by France. One of the edicts issued by the conquerors, with a view to nationalizing the acquired territory, was that the French language should no longer be taught in their public schools. And this furnishes the *motif* for Daudet's "The Last Class."

The story is simply told in the first person by Frantz, a little Alsatian. Frantz recalls that historic day when he set off for school a little late. Hoping that he might perhaps escape the teacher's ferrule, he cuts across the public square without even stopping to find out the meaning of the knot of perturbed villagers who are discussing an announcement upon the bulletin board in front of the mayor's office. As he slips into his seat, hoping to escape observation, he is impressed by the unnatural quiet in the school-room, and also by the presence of a number of the town notables, all solemnly garbed in holiday dress.

The lad marvels that he is not even chided for his lateness, and is more than ever mystified as the schoolmaster proceeds with one lesson and another, all under stress of deep emotion.

By and by the schoolmaster tells his pupils of the cruel edict, and Frantz begins

to realize that the worthy master will no longer rule in his accustomed place. He becomes conscious of neglected work, and a whole tide of better resolutions surges in his breast. Finally the master has heard the last class and arising seeks to find utterance for his farewells. At first he is able to give them sound advice, but at length no words will come, and with such quiverings of lip as even Daudet tries not to depict, he chokes, swiftly turns to the blackboard, takes a piece of chalk, and, bearing with all his might, dashes off his final expression of patriotic protest and personal sorrow: VIVE LA FRANCE!

"Then he stood there, with his head resting against the wall, and without speaking, he motioned to us with his hand:

"That is all; go."

On rereading *The Last Class* for the dozenth time, I find that it is surrounded with an emotional atmosphere which, textually, the story does not contain. I think this must be the aura emanating from the spirit of the story; for a great work of fiction is not only the product of emotion, but it kindles emotion, because it is a creation, an entity, a living being. Doubtless the contention could not be demonstrated that, when properly received, a great work of fictional art will arouse the same emotions in the reader as were first enkindled in the breast of its author when the story was born. None the less, I believe it to be true. What feelings, then, must Daudet have known when he gave

windlass, and you may imagine what a humiliation it must have been for a Pope's mule to see herself hanging at that height, afloat with her legs in the air like a beetle at the end of a string. And all Avignon looking on!

The unhappy beast did not sleep that night. It seemed to her as though she were forever turning upon that accursed platform, with the laughter of the city below. Then she thought of that infamous Tistet Védène, and of the delightful kick that she proposed to turn loose the next morning. Ah, my friends, what a kick! They could see the smoke at Pampérigouste.

But, while this pretty reception was being prepared for him at the stable, do you know what Tistet Védène was doing? He was going singing down the Rhône on one of the papal galleys, on his way to the Court of Naples with a company of young nobles whom the city sent every year to Queen Joanna for exercise in diplomacy and in manners. Tistet was not of noble birth; but the Pope desired to recompense him for what he had done for his mule, and above all for the activity he had shown throughout the day of the rescue.

It was the mule who was disappointed the next day!

"Ah, the bandit! He suspected something!" she thought as she shook her bells in fury. "But it's all the same; go, scoundrel! You will find it waiting for you on your return, that kick—I'll save it for you!"

And she did save it.

After the departure of Tistet, the Pope's mule once more found her course of tranquil life and her former habits. Neither Quinquet nor Béluguet came again to her stable. The delightful days of wine *à la Française* had returned, and with them good-humor, the long siestas, and the little prancing step when she crossed the Avignon bridge. How-

ever, since her adventure she was always shown a slight coldness in the city. Folks whispered together as she passed; the old people shook their heads, the children laughed as they pointed to the belfry. Even the good Pope had no longer quite the same confidence in his friend, and whenever he permitted himself to take a little nap on her back on Sundays on returning from his vineyard, this thought always came to him: "What if I should awake 'way up there on the platform!" The mule discerned this and suffered, without saying a word; only, when any one near her mentioned the name of Tistet Védène, her long ears quivered, and with a little laugh she would sharpen the iron of her shoes on the paving.

Seven years passed thus; then at the end of those seven years Tistet Védène returned from the Court of Naples. His time there was not at an end; but he had learned that the Pope's chief mustard-bearer had died suddenly at Avignon, and, since the post suited him well, he had come in great haste in order to apply for it.

When that intriguer of a Védène entered into the great hall of the palace, the Holy Father had difficulty in recognizing him, so tall had he grown, and stout of body. It must be said, too, that the worthy Pope had grown old and could no longer see well without spectacles.

Tistet was not frightened.

"What, Holy Father, you do not remember me any more? It is I, Tistet Védène!"

"Védène?"

"Why, yes, you know very well—the one who use to carry the wine *à la Française* to your mule."

"Oh—yes—yes—I remember. A good little fellow, that Tistet Védène! And now, what is it that he wants of us?"

"Oh, a very little thing, Holy Father.

forth *The Last Class*. It must be these that I myself feel, for I do not, by analysis, find them all present in the text, even by suggestion. Happy artist, that can so project the creations of his soul that they henceforth live and expand and communicate their messages to multitudes to him unknown! So all great fiction is alive; so lives the work of Alphonse Daudet.

The emotion in *The Siege of Berlin* is of a different type. It, too, finds its *motif* in the Franco-Prussian War; this time in the Siege of Paris itself.

An invalided old cuirassier of the First Empire, Colonel Jouve, lies in his room in the Champs-Élysées, fronting the Arc de Triomphe. Day by day his granddaughter brings to him news of the progress of the war. So fully is his life wrapped up in the success of the French armies that, in order to brighten his closing days, they tell him fictitious stories of the success of his compatriots. But one day, when the German lines have drawn close about the beleaguered capital and the end is at hand, it becomes difficult to deceive the old soldier any longer. Still, fresh victories are always supplied by the news-bureau of love, and the old man can scarcely wait for the home-coming of the victorious battalions. So when one day the sound of bugle and drum is heard, and the tramp of marching feet beneath the windows of the upper room, you can picture the delight of this old veteran. With a superhuman effort he leaves his bed and looks out of the

window—only to see the Prussian troops instead of the cheering cohorts of his countrymen! And in this last pang of disappointment, the old man dies.

Both of these stories end with the note of disappointment and consequent sorrow. Poe has declared that the tone of beauty is sadness, and surely there is a penetrating beauty as well as a thrill of sublimity in the sadness of both these wonderfully-wrought episodes. Here are seen the beginnings of the realistic method which Daudet later adopted. Yet, as these stories both indicate, he still carried with him the romanticism of his earlier inspirations, untouched by either the too painful naturalism or the sentimentality of some of his later stories.

In still greater contrast than either of these to the other is the story of our present translation, *The Pope's Mule*. Here are all the joyous satire, the rollicking fun-making, and the picturesque description, of this unexcelled interpreter of southern life. Daudet's wit and humor, characterization and description, local color, kaleidoscopic pageantry, are at their best, with never a thought of enforcing a moral or of sounding any emotion deeper than that of boyish amusement. It is the author of *Tartarin* who now writes, and not the later master of the novelist's art.

Notwithstanding the success of the fecund and versatile author of *Sapho* as a playwright, and his much wider vogue as a novelist, I wonder if after all he did not love best his short-stories and

I came to ask you—by the way, do you still have your mule? And is she well? Ah, so much the better! I came to ask of you the post of the chief mustard-bearer who has just died."

"First mustard-bearer, you! Why, you are too young. How old are you, then?"

"Twenty years two months, illustrious Pontiff, just five years older than your mule. Ah! that excellent creature! If you only knew how I loved that mule! How I languished for her in Italy! Are you not going to let me see her?"

"Yes, my child, you shall see her," said the good Pope, deeply moved. "And since you loved her so much, that excellent animal, I do not wish you to live apart from her. From this day, I attach you to my person as chief mustard-bearer. My cardinals will raise an outcry, but so much the worse! I am used to it. Come to meet us to-morrow as we return from vespers, we will deliver to you the insignia of your office in the presence of our chapter, and then—I will take you to see the mule, and you shall come to the vineyard with us two—ha! ha! Go along, now!"

If Tistet Védène was content upon leaving the grand hall, I need not tell you with what impatience he awaited the ceremony of the next day. Meanwhile, they had some one in the palace who was still more happy and more impatient than he: it was the mule. From the time of Védène's return, until vespers on the following day, the terrible creature did not cease cramming herself with oats and kicking at the wall with her hind feet. She too was preparing herself for the ceremony.

Accordingly, on the morrow, when vespers had been said, Tistet Védène made his entrance into the courtyard of the Papal palace. All the high clergy were there—the cardinals in red robes, the advocate of the devil in black velvet, the convent abbés with their little mitres,

the churchwardens of the Saint-Agrico, the violet hoods of the members of the household, the lesser clergy also, the papal soldiers in full uniform, the three brotherhoods of penitents, the hermits from Mount Ventoux with their ferocious eyes and the little clerk who walks behind them carrying the bell, the Flagellant Brothers, naked to the waist, the blond sacristans in robes like judges—all, all, down to those who pass the holy water, and he who lights and he who extinguishes the candles—not one was missing. Ah! That was a beautiful installation, with bells, fireworks, sunlight, music, and, as always, those mad tambourine players who led the dance down by the Avignon Bridge.

When Védène appeared in the midst of the assemblage, his imposing deportment and fine appearance called forth a murmur of approbation. He was a magnificent Provençal of the blond type, with long hair curled at the ends and a small unruly beard which resembled the shavings of fine metal from the graving tool of his father, the carver of gold. The report was current that the fingers of Queen Joanna had now and then toyed with that blond beard; and the Sire de Védène had in truth the haughty air and the absent look of those whom queens have loved. That day, to do honor to his nation, he had replaced his Neapolitan garb by a jacket bordered with color-of-rose, in the Provençal fashion, and in his hood trembled a great plume of the Camargue ibis.

As soon as he had entered, the first mustard-bearer bowed with a gallant air, and directed his steps toward the grand dais, where the Pope awaited him in order to deliver to him the insignia of his office: the yellow wooden spoon and the saffron-colored coat. The mule was at the foot of the staircase, all caparisoned and ready to depart for the vineyard. When he passed her, Tistet Védène had

prose fantasies. In his greatest real novels, *Froment, Jr., and Risler, Sr.*; *Jack*; *The Nabob*; *Kings in Exile*; and *Numa Roumestan*, the episode often occurs.

Such a temperament as Daudet's, both introspective and finely sensitive to the impressions of his surroundings, would naturally make much of his fiction biographical and even autobiographical. Indeed, a close study of his works, read in the light of his life, shows how he has woven into his stories many personal facts. In that exquisite child-document *Little What's-His-Name*, we have a rather full record of his boyhood and entrance into Paris. *Jack*, also, is full of his own early sorrows, while one character after another may be traced to folk whom he knew. His mind, and his heart too, were note-books on which he was always transcribing his impressions of life, and—here is the vital thing, after all—recreating them for use in his own inimitable way.

So Daudet was not an extreme realist—scarcely a typical realist at all, for while he used the realistic method for observation and faithful record, he no more got beyond sympathizing with his characters than did Dickens, to whom more than to any other English-writing novelist he must be compared.

But Daudet "belonged" to no school, expounded no theories, stood for no reforms. He was just a kindly, humorous, sympathetic, patiently exact maker of fascinating fictions, and as such we shall love him quite in the proportion that we know him. Life,

as he saw it, was full of sadness, but that did not make him conclude that it was not worth the living. Happily married, he knew the solaces of home life. Unlike Maupassant, "What's the use!" was far from being the heart of his philosophy. Disenchanted with life he never was. A disheartening view of sordidness, vice, and misery left him still with open eyes, for he would not close them against truth; but it never prevented his turning his gaze upon the beautiful, the humorous, and the good—a lovable trio ever!—and finding in them some healing for his hurt.

a pleasant smile and paused to give her two or three friendly pats upon the back, looking out of the corner of his eye to see if the Pope noticed him. The situation was admirable. The mule let fly:

"There! You are trapped, bandit! For seven years I have saved that for you!"

And she let loose a kick so terrible, so terrible that at Pampérigouste itself one could see the smoke; a cloud of blond smoke in which fluttered an ibis plume—all that was left of the ill-fated Tistet Védène.

Mules' kicks are not ordinarily so appalling; but then this was a papal mule; and besides, think of it! she had saved it up for seven years. There is no finer example of ecclesiastical spite.



TO-MORROW'S SONG

BY THEODOSIA GARRISON

OH, my dear, my dear,
The songs you have given to me,
The glad-heart rhymes of our gypsy times
Of summer and sun and sea.

Oh, my dear, my dear,
In my heart I have closed them all,
To keep for a day when our heads are gray
And the snows of winter fall.

Oh, my dear, my dear,
We may never grow old and sad,
When a song may bring on a path of spring
A merry, mad day we had.

Oh, my dear, my dear,
Be sure we shall listen and smile,
Our hearts gone back on the old, wild track,
And my hand in yours the while.

MARY

By Elizabeth Maury Coombs

“YES ’m, Miss Deacon, Pete Bruffey were a bad man. Why, the whole Blue Ridge mountains knowed that when *he* sot eyes on a gander at the gander-pullin’s, thar were n’t no more popularity nor pullin’ for that thar gander. It was Pete’s,—for he were n’t no more ’feard of a gun than you be of a button-hook, an’ all that skeers anybody ’bout’n ary button-hook as I ever knowed is that it be agoin’ to slip behind the beereau to be lost to the world twell next spring-cleanin’.”

The Deaconess of the mountains smiled gently.

“I ’member,” mused the old crone, her eyes fixed on the back log of the hickory fire, as she gazed into the past—“I ’member the day Pete was born—’member it jest as well as I do yestiddy’s dinner—which were turnip-tops teched with frost; the bacon were n’t hardly cooked a mite, an’ my son’s wife ain’t no gre’t hand at corn-bread—which, when all is said, is the bone of the dinner. But thar, whar is the daughter-in-law what *kin* cook to suit her husband’s mother! I dunno whar she be—but ’pears like I done hearn tell that she died afore she was born. Whar was I?”

“Lawd, Lawd! how time goes, an’ folks in front of it! I ’member when Pete was born, an’ I was thar t’other ’night when he died. All them times what lay in betwixt an’ between, he were jest the same—maybe sometimes a *leetle mite* samer. Some folks is born cross-eyed, but Pete he were born with a cross-eyed soul. Seem-like he seed everybody an’ everything plumb twisticated. You ’member Watch, his ole dorg? That ole flea-bit fool dorg wored a hole plumb in the big road gittin’ up an’ a-layin’ down agin to turn diffunt sides on himself to the north wind, whilst he waited o’ nights down yonder at Punk’s ba’room to come home with Pete. Yet Pete were such a onery cuss he ain’t nuvver had a kind word fer his dorg—much less fer his wife.

“An’ now you say Mary Bruffey is right smart sick, an’ you b’lieve she’s not a good ’oman! Mary Bruffey bad? Why, bless your soul, Miss Deacon, that thar ’oman is as good as green peas in spring! Why, I lay you could stew more natural meanness out’n a Baptist preacher—an’ me a hard-shell church member in good standin’ says

it—than you could out'n that 'oman's whole body—bones, boots, an' all!

"I knowed her when she was a slip—knowed her when she looked more like a clove pink what had been pressed in the fam'ly Bible than anything you ever see. Sweet an' slim she were, even for a gal-critter, always with them wide gray eyes o' her'n a-lookin' 'way off into the middle o' next week. Knowed her when her Pa had her edicated jest like a lady to play the pianner with fingers as white as the drivellin' snow—they were n't mountain folks like we-alls. She could play 'Monastery Bells,' an' all—'cept the front start—of the 'Maiden's Prayer,' an' Teacher said she only had to skip that 'cause why her fingers could n't stretch, an' that made it sound kinder like the Maiden's Jumps instead.

"Mary ain't *nuvver* been mean, either that day or this. I stayed with her when Pete died, an' him a-kickin' at me like a mule at a yaller jacket, whilst I was a-tryin' for to wrop his cold foots up in my red flannen petticoat, which be the same one I got on the Chris'mus tree at the Mission nigh on to three year ago, an' which by this time is wore that thin a blind man could dart straws through it. I ain't complainin', Miss Deacon, but yet I will say that, when all is said, Chris'mus ain't far off when you see Jeemes' ole dorg Tige begin for to stand round the 'simmon tree waitin' for one to drap.

"But, Lawd, Lawd, whar was I by now!

"'Mary!' Pete would call, an' she a-hurryin' an' a-standin' at the head o' the bed, a-cryin', so 'feard he was goin' to die, an' me a-standin' at the foot o' the bed, a-cryin', so 'feard he was n't.

"'Mary! Mary!' he'd call. 'Why don't you light the lamp?'

"An' thar sot the lamp—a green tin one with a cracked chimbley—on a soap-box right afore his two eyes!

"'Gawd knows the shadders is dark enough!' Then he'd shrink back, tremblin' like water in the wind. An' that thar Mary woman, she'd tell him the lamp *was* a-burnin'. The Book says, 'While yet the lamp holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return,' but the sinner can't always see when the lamp be a-burnin'—that's the way I reads the riddle, for Pete ain't *nuvver* returned—an' I for one am glad of it, for I was his nearest neighbor.

"No'm, Pete Bruffey ain't *nuvver* come back to these here mountains, though Mary knelt down by his bed an' tried to lead him to the light, as the Word says.

"'Honey,' she'd say, 'I be here with yer, an' the light is clear. Did n't you see how it flared up when the wind comed through the broken blind, jest like it always do?'

"But he did n't seem like he could hear, fer he jest kep' on a-sayin' like childern learn to read:

" 'Mary, Mary, light the lamp. The shadders is darkenin'!'

"Ole Watch whimped, with his nose against the door-jamb—scratched at it—seemed like he half wanted to come in, an' half did n't. Then he sot out thar on a little hump o' ground an' moaned his heart out to the mountains. That thar dorg loved Pete, an' for why the Lawd knows—ef *He* do! *He* made dorgs, an' *He* made women, an' sometimes I think *He* made 'em the same day, an' His mixin's got mixed, fer Mary would ha' followed Pete into the shadders. I was thar, an' I seed her make up her mind ter foller him.

"You tell me she turns folkses' little childern from her door. Pore critter, she ain't nuvver had none o' her own. She'd always be a-sayin' ter me, 'Babies 'ud make a new man out'n Pete.' But fer my part, if so be as I had er been in the new-makin' men business, I'd ha' begun on some good fresh gully dirt ruther than waste stitches on Pete Bruffey's remains. But that's neither here ner thar. You say she's cross and kicks the ole dorg when he whines; she has even been knowed to go to the sto' to get whiskey an' try to get drunk—she that's hated that stuff like cold pizen ever since she come into the world! She's tryin' to fool you into thinkin' she's a bad 'oman, Miss Deacon. Mary ain't no drunkard—she's jest tryin' to be bad so's to foller Pete. She thinks thar ain't no other way ter do it. She *ain't* bad! She may fool you—she may fool the preacher—she may fool the Lawd—but she ain't agoin' to fool me, fer I hev been her nighest neighbor for nigh on ter forty year. Pete were a drunkard, an' Mary has done made up her mind to foller Pete—I seed it that night when she said, said she: 'I'm comin' with *you*, Pete.' An' he says, sighin' like the breath of wind that dies down at break o' day, 'The—shadders—is over—it—all!'

"I tries to suage her away, then, 'Mary,' says I, 'the light was jest over yonder ahind the hills—but,' says I, 'Pete he jest ain't nuvver seen it, 'cause the pore critter's soul's eyes was plumb twis-ticated.'

"That was two years an' a month ago. Fer two days after—the day of Pete's funeral—my ole Spot she had a heifer calf, an' it snowed, rained, and hailed on the buryin' day, an' so I was mighty sorry fer Mary: a buryin' day's got to be mighty sunshiny to collect ary crowd in these here mountains. But that same day I was mighty glad fer myself an' ole Spot, fer my ole man had done declar'd out as how he weren't goin' to spend any more time traipsin' round the world lookin' up good homes fer bull calves ter please me an' my contrary ole spotted cow.

"Am I goin' to Mary when you say she says she'd ruther I would n't? Why, Miss Deacon," protested the old woman, rising and

reaching her hand over to where her slat sunbonnet hung, drooping from its peg, "*in course* I'm agoin'! Mary jest don't want ter let on she wants her friends, 'cause she's afeard you won't think she's cross an' mean enough ter foller Pete."

Adjusting the limp bonnet over her sleek white hair, with its small white knot looking like a silver-skin onion at the nape of her neck, and scorning by a gesture the proffered help of the Deaconess, the old woman stepped along the steep path leading to the big silk-leaved poplar that whispered beside the little spring she and Mary had shared in common all the years of their neighborliness. The path of red clay like a painted streak led up the hill and through a field of yellow sedge, and in the gullies the honeysuckle vines, red-purple by the frost, ran like spilt wine down the hillsides.

The old dog growled from where he drowsed on the shuck mat in front of Mary's door, but sank down again with a groan and only one or two tired rat-tats on the floor with his stump tail, as Mary's neighbor spoke to him. Reaching across, she pulled the leather string that lifted the latch, and she and the Deaconess went straight into the one-room cabin without knocking.

"Mary," said the old woman, going toward the bed cheerily, "I brung yer some of my fried pies—thinkin' you was sick an' might relish somethin' that would set light on yer stummick."

But the Deaconess advanced to the bed and found her patient too far gone for even fried pies to make an appeal to her appetite. A change had come since she had gone by in the morning to her little school—the subtle gray change of twilight, the courier of the dark that comes before the dawn.

The little Deaconess knelt by the bed and lifted up her voice: "O Lord, our Light in time of Darkness, our Strength in——"

The dying woman's hand stayed her.

"I'd a sight ruther ye—would n't pray—miss. I don't feel no call ter go ter heaven. I'd a sight ruther go with Pete."

"But maybe," faltered the Deaconess, in spite of the prevailing opinion of Pete's intimates—"maybe Pete went to heaven."

"No 'm, he did n't—you did n't know Pete."

"Well, even if Pete did n't go to heaven, you want to—because you know there is no marrying nor giving in marriage there, and your husband will be the same to you as any one else."

"Yes 'm," spoke Mary's old neighbor from the fireplace, where she was putting the noses of the chunks together, "I read that onct, an' says I to my ole man, 'Bill, I do reckon as how there's a confusion an' a stew up thar when menfolks can change partners every time the coffee's weak an' the socks ain't darned.' An' he 'lowed as how, 'Ole 'oman, you got to be a sight more keerful o' my feelin's up thar

than what you done been down here. You jest dar say, 'You better had split me some kindlin's, Bill,' an' I'm gone 'fore you have time to see whether the wood-box is full or not!'"

Soon the good old woman hurried forward in her heartsome way with the bowl of hot tea she had brewed, but Mary's hands were busied feebly with picking threads from the worn patchwork quilt, her eyes were looking out into the darkness: she seemed only to remember the one passive passion of her passive life—Pete.

The snow commenced to fall, whisperingly among the brown leaves that still clung tenaciously to the oaks before the cabin door. Sometimes a flake or two even fell down the wide chimney with a little sputter upon the live red coals.

"I'm plumb glad it ain't rain," declared the old woman. "Rain sobs so, an' it might wake Mary. Lawd send she may sleep clean across to the other side!"

But towards morning the gray eyes opened, and Mary smiled like a child in its sleep.

"The shadders fall—I be comin', Pete—comin' to you in the darkenin' shadders! But over yonder, ahint the mountains, seems like I see a light—I see a light as we two kin find."

THE MOTHER

BY MARY ELEANOR ROBERTS

WHEN you were very little and my knee
Was for your climbing eagerness too high,
How would I bend me to your anxious cry,
Catching you up, all trembling unto me.
Then would we cling together joyously,
Blessing and blessed: my forehead was your sky,
My orbèd arms your universe, and I
Your Providence and you my devotee.

But now so far beyond me lies your way,
I cannot mark it with my utmost sight,
Nor what horizon draws your steady soul.
Yet may I linger, justified, to-day:
The bow that sped the arrow on its flight
Exults although it shall not see the goal.

COLONEL COPP'S FINESSE

By Frank E. Verney

COLONEL COPP was a little man with a benevolent head of white hair, a red cherubic countenance, and one of the astutest minds in the city. The dinners which he was in the habit of giving at the Hotel Cecil, where he had a superb suite, were absolute epochs in lavish hospitality and gastronomic excellence. In fact, they made of the little American Colonel's name a synonym for magnificence; and in every place where a newspaper was read "Copp" became a household word. It was not so well known that one of Colonel Copp's mottoes was, "A good appearance covers a multitude of deficiencies," and the few who were aware of it did not appear to recognize the significant applicability of the maxim to the splendor of the Colonel's entertainments. This seeming obtuseness was probably due largely to the American's personality, which radiated confidence and respect. He was the sort of man that appeared born to be a trustee and custodian of other people's purses. Therefore, it can easily be understood that with such assets the Colonel had many opportunities of making money which the ordinary man has not.

One morning, while all the clubs were busy talking of a wonderful "aeroplane dinner" which Colonel Copp had given the previous evening in the courtyard of the Cecil, the Colonel himself was seated in an easy-chair in one of his rooms, smoking a cigar and examining his pass-book. The aroma of the leaf was excellent, and, so far as one could judge from the placid expression of the Colonel's face, the contents of the book might have been equally satisfactory.

As a matter of fact, the Colonel's current account was in a condition best described as delicate. All the money he could get together of his own and his friends' he was putting in a great Canadian railway scheme for tapping a big section of the wheat belt, the development of which had hitherto been held up for want of adequate means of transport. This railway was destined to make fabulous profits, and, incidentally, a multimillionaire of its chairman and chief shareholder. The money which Colonel Copp did not put into this railway he put into his famous repasts, which gave him a renown above bankers' references, and a circle of moneyed acquaintances able, and even anxious, to share in

the financial operations of a man in obvious possession of the touch of Midas.

So on the morning following the renowned banquet the Colonel found himself facing a difficulty. It was only the third of the month, two more dinners were arranged for, and the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds only was in hand. The Colonel decided that it was up to him to make some money quickly in a way which would not interfere with other interests.

After a few moments' silent thought the Colonel rose, put his pass-book into a despatch-box, which he carefully locked and carried to his safe. As he shut the safe he uttered audibly the conclusion of his train of thought. "Yes," he said, in the tone of a man who thinks he has an answer to a puzzle: "I think I will take a country place."

Half an hour later the Colonel, immaculately groomed as usual, got down from a taxi at the office of Messrs. Right, Hank, & Futley, the eminent estate agents.

The clerk to whom he handed his card escorted him immediately to the private office of the senior partner.

Mr. Right greeted the Colonel as a man who gave dinners at twenty guineas a head should be greeted.

"We received your message, sir," he went on, "from the Hotel Cecil, and I think we have exactly the house to suit you."

"I believe you have," replied the Colonel. "As a matter of fact, it is your advertisement of the Duke of Belsire's place that caused me to call."

"It is the finest mansion in England," began the agent, with professional glibness and more than professional warmth. "Early Norman, perfect preservation, magnif——"

"Yes, yes," interrupted the Colonel. "May I trouble you to show me the plans?"

"Certainly, sir; no trouble."

Mr. Right rang the bell.

"Bring me the Belsire Abbey drawings, please," said he to the clerk who answered the summons.

The Colonel turned to the agent. "By the way," he remarked, "I gather that this is the first time the Abbey has been let."

"Yes. The Duke is much attached to the place, and spends most of his time there. The country is a first-class sporting one, you know. Now he has medical orders to spend the next three years in a semi-tropical zone, with the alternative of the family vault."

"Really!" said the Colonel. "I had no idea he was so ill. He is a wealthy man, is n't he?"

The agent smiled. "Well, sir, I don't know whether you would consider him wealthy, but his rent-roll is reputed at fifty thousand a year."

The clerk knocked and entered.

"Here are the plans, sir."

"I wonder at the Duke's letting the place," said Colonel Copp, as he bent over the drawings.

"He is doing so, really," replied Right, "because he feels, reasonably enough, that with a tenant in residence the place inside and out would suffer less than if closed up and left to servants."

"Now, Mr. Right," said the Colonel, "I take it that I could have immediate possession?"

"Certainly. There is nothing to prevent that."

"Very well. Then will you kindly arrange for some responsible person to take me over the place to-morrow? I do not like wasting time, and if the place suits me, I'd like to fix things right away."

"Yes," said Right, with business-like promptitude; "the Duke's private agent, who is, as it happens, a sort of cousin of his Grace, will be there."

"My secretary will inform you in the morning of the train I shall travel by," concluded the Colonel, as he took up his hat.

When Mr. Right returned from seeing the Colonel into his cab he called to one of his staff:

"Wilson, ring up the hotel where Mr. Bellairs is staying and ask him to come and see me at once."

"Very good, sir."

In about twenty minutes the Duke of Belsire's agent arrived and was taken into the private office.

"Ah! How do you do, Mr. Bellairs? I was fortunate in catching you before you left your hotel."

"The Abbey, I suppose?" queried Bellairs, as he took the indicated seat.

"Yes. I believe I've found a tenant."

"What! Already? I'd no idea house-hunting Croesuses were so common."

"They're not—although the prospective occupant of the Abbey belongs to that genus. His name is Colonel Copp."

"Really *the* Colonel Copp?" said Bellairs interestedly.

Right nodded assent.

"That's something like! He'll make an excellent tenant—unless he should want to give an aquatic banquet in the picture gallery," said Bellairs rather irresponsibly.

"In my opinion," said Mr. Right, "Colonel Copp is one of the very few parvenus who really could be trusted with the Abbey. Now as to the point. The Colonel wishes to be shown over the place to-morrow. I will telegraph to your office in Belsire the time of the

Colonel's arrival. You will perhaps have one of the Abbey broughams to meet him. I will have the agreement and copy drawn up and post it to you to-night. You will then be able to clinch the bargain. Americans like hustling methods, and we must not let the Colonel slip through our fingers."

"He'll have all the agents in the country after him when it is known that he is looking for a place," remarked Bellairs.

"Exactly. In the agreement I shall leave the price open. You can fill it in when agreed on."

"Eight thousand per annum," stated Bellairs, "is the Duke's figure."

"I think," said Mr. Right, "that if the Colonel fancies the Abbey, he will not question ten thousand. You understand."

"I see," said Bellairs, with a sententious smile.

The next morning at 11.35 Colonel Copp stepped out of a first-class carriage onto the small platform of Belsire station.

He was the only passenger, and Bellairs, who was waiting at the ticket gate, walked forward and introduced himself.

"Messrs. Right, Hank, & Futley wired that you were coming on this train, sir. I have one of the Abbey carriages to take us up."

"It is very kind of you," said the Colonel.

"It will take," said Bellairs, as they seated themselves in the brougham, "several hours to look over the place thoroughly; and the stables and shooting——"

"I am afraid we must get it done quicker than that," said the Colonel. "I am a very busy man, Mr. Bellairs. Two hours is all I can spare. I guess you can describe things on the way up."

The drive, which lay chiefly through the estate, occupied half an hour. Bellairs was fluent on fish, fur, and feather, and the Colonel an intelligent listener. Listening was a virtue he cultivated. It paid.

When they had passed through the lodge gates the Colonel remarked on the shaven sward beneath the spreading park trees.

"Yes," answered Bellairs; "the Duke thinks as much of his place as he would of a wife—more, perhaps. It is on record that the nearest his Grace ever came to the dock of a criminal court was when he discovered one of the house-party guests playing on the tennis lawns in spiked cricket boots."

"Here we are," said Bellairs at length, as the carriage rounded a magnificent Italian fountain and drew up in front of the chief entrance hall of the Abbey.

"There is only one thing," said the Colonel, as he and his cicerone stood in the great hall after their round of inspection: "to suit me, the place would require another room, which the Abbey has not got."

"But," began Bellairs, "surely there is enough——"

"As you were going to observe, Mr. Bellairs, there is plenty of room in the Abbey for any one, but my requirements are peculiar. I want a very large apartment as a special banqueting-chamber."

Bellairs smiled reminiscently.

"Now, the hall in which we are standing would not well lend itself to any other guise. For instance, the dinner I gave the other day——"

"I understand, sir," said Bellairs smilingly. "An aeroplane scene in a Norman hall would be like a fairy pantomime on a torpedo-boat. But could not one of the state drawing-rooms be used?"

"I am afraid not; for the same reason. Now, the billiard-room, which you tell me has just been added, is the most likely, but that will be required for its original purpose."

"Well, sir," said Bellairs, anxious to lose no chance, "have you any other suggestion?"

"What I propose," said the Colonel, "is to build the room."

Bellairs's face showed that he was rather startled at the idea.

"I should," the Colonel went on, "make the addition entirely at my own expense—it would not cost the Duke a dollar. The plans, of course, would be made by a leading architect."

Bellairs realized that the suggestion was reasonable enough. It was no extraordinary thing for a tenant to make an addition to a place. Many landlords would jump at an opportunity of getting a wing added gratuitously.

The Colonel offered his cigar-case. "If you are a connoisseur of Havanas, you will like these. I bought the whole crop."

Bellairs took one, and thought of Right's warning, "We must not let him slip through our fingers." Looking at his watch, he said: "If there is nothing else you wish to see, Colonel Copp, and you are agreeable, we will drive back into Belsire, and I will get on the telephone to Mr. Right, and put your suggestion to him. I believe he has discretionary powers. He could quickly communicate with the Duke, if necessary. He is staying at Claridge's, preparing for his journey."

"Very well," said the Colonel. "We had better waste no time. The point must be settled at once, for I have several agents coming to see me in the morning."

They departed immediately.

When Bellairs's office was reached, he told his clerk to get a call through to London. As soon as the Colonel was comfortably seated, the agent produced the agreement.

"Yes," said the Colonel, after a perusal; "that seems quite in order. The matter of the addition is the essential point. It may be that I shall take some other way out of the difficulty, but I must have permission to erect the room if I think it desirable."

It was not long before the clerk opened the door, with the information that London was "through."

"Will you be good enough to excuse me a moment, Colonel Copp? Mr. Right, I expect, is on."

Bellairs went to the room where was the telephone.

"Is that Mr. Right? . . . Good! Colonel Copp is in the office at the present moment. I've shown him over the Abbey, and he is very pleased with it, but he thinks he may require to build on another room. . . . Yes? . . . Yes, that is what I said to him. He wants it chiefly for freak dinners, and that sort of thing. . . . No, it must be settled now. If not, we shall lose him."

At the other end of the wire, Right was thinking rapidly. The Colonel was actually waiting to sign the agreement. He wanted to add to the Abbey. The addition would be an asset to the landlord. In most cases, he would not have hesitated. He decided quickly.

"Tell him," he said along the wire, "yes. Fill in the top price, and get the agreement signed. I will see if I can interview the Duke and inform him what I have done. If he should object—which is unlikely—we can explain to the Colonel. He seems a very good sort, and we can work him all right."

"Very good," answered Bellairs. "I'll bring the agreement up to town this evening."

Bellairs went back to the Colonel. "Mr. Right agrees to your wishes, sir, in the matter of the addition."

The Colonel nodded, and said briskly, "Very well. All that remains is the agreement."

Bellairs brought the documents to the table and rapidly filled in the figures.

The Colonel made no comment on the amount. He did not appear to consider it worth notice.

Bellairs inwardly congratulated himself upon his deal.

"You had better add," said the Colonel, as he took up a pen, "'The tenant to be at full liberty to add a room to his own purpose and convenience, if he so desires.'"

Bellairs inserted the clause on each of the agreements. The signatures were then attached and duly witnessed by the clerk, and the Colonel became the tenant of Belsire Abbey.

The business concluded, the Colonel pocketed his agreement and rose. "I shall just be in time for my train," he said, leading the way out of the office.

When Colonel Copp reached Paddington he took a cab and drove straight to the chambers of Macter, the famous architect.

He found that eminent man in and disengaged. "How can I be

of service to you, Colonel Copp?" he said, as he fingered the American's card.

"I want," stated Copp, "within two or three days, a plan and design for a banqueting-hall which I wish to build onto a country-place of mine."

"Two or three days," repeated the architect.

"I shall, of course, pay for any inconvenience."

"It will be advisable," said the architect, "for me or one of my staff to see the original building: you probably have the plans of it."

"I have the plans certainly, but you can dispense with the view," said the Colonel. "I want something Eastern—of the Taj Mahal style."

"Taj Mahal!" ejaculated Macter.

The Colonel continued, "I will send you round a plan of the wall from which it is to abut."

The architect picked up a pencil. "Will you tell me the ideas you wish carried out, and the size, etc.?"

The Colonel gave the necessary details, and then took his departure.

Macter walked across his room to a sideboard and drew out a decanter and a syphon. "Well, I'm ——!" was his toast. "Minarets in an English park! However," he reflected, "he's got the gold to gild 'em."

On the fourth day following the Colonel's call on the architect, Mr. Bellairs was in the office of Messrs. Right, Hank, & Futley, discussing with Mr. Right the new tenant of the Abbey.

"I think," Bellairs was saying, "that the sharpness of the American financier is much overrated. They are really very easily managed."

"If," smugly said Right, looking up from his correspondence, "we had a few clients like the Colonel every day, there would be something in estate agency."

"And not much trouble either," laughed Bellairs.

"Come in," called Right, as a knock came at the door.

"Colonel Copp's secretary to see you, sir," said the clerk.

"Show him in."

"Speak of the devil and his minion appears," said Bellairs.

The secretary was ushered in.

"Take a seat," said Right pleasantly.

"I have come from Colonel Copp," commenced the secretary, "with the plans of the intended addition to Belsire Abbey."

Right took the envelope.

"My chief," the secretary continued, "is sending down the workmen to-morrow, as he wishes the place prepared without delay."

Mr. Right was smoothing out the tracings on the table. His companions saw his face suddenly stiffen into an incredulous stare.

"Wha—at?" he burst out, knocking over a pile of books in his excitement. "What on earth—— Do you mean to say—— Is this a practical joke?" he demanded quickly, with a glare at the unfortunate secretary.

"I am afraid I do not understand you," said that gentleman, with some astonishment.

Bellairs looked from one to the other, an expression of uneasy curiosity on his countenance.

"Understand!" shouted Right. He pulled himself up sharply. "This drawing," he continued in a tone of forced quietness—"has it come direct from Colonel Copp? Has he seen it?"

"My chief sealed it himself," answered the secretary.

Right rose from his table.

"I will call and see Colonel Copp," he said.

The secretary bowed and withdrew.

"Look at that," said Right.

Bellairs took the sheet in his hand. He saw a beautifully-colored perspective drawing of an "Arabian Nights" sort of edifice, with a lofty gilt dome and six delicate spires.

"What are you going to do?" he asked.

"Do?" answered Right, who was thrusting on his coat. "I am going to tell the old idiot that he can't put a place like that against a Norman Abbey."

A quarter of an hour later he was being shown into Colonel Copp's business-room at the Cecil.

"How do you do, Mr. Right?" said the Colonel cheerfully. "You are just in time to join me in a little *apéritif*."

Right was not in the frame of mind for courtesies. "I have called, sir," he began impetuously, "about the plan——"

"Cocktails," continued the Colonel, "are excellent before dinner, but at lunch-time a mixed French and Italian Vermouth is the proposition I recommend."

The entrance of a waiter probably saved Right from consigning *apéritifs* to a place where they are presumably not customary. So he smiled in a futile way and said he would take whatever his host took.

When the glasses were on the table the Colonel opened:

"Now, Mr. Right, regarding the plan. I think Macter has made an excellent design."

"Are you referring to this?" answered Right, thrusting the perspective sketch in front of Copp.

"That is it."

"Why, my dear sir," burst out Right, "it is ridiculous—unthinkable—absolutely out of the question! It would make the Abbey into a freak, and the Duke the laughing-stock of the country."

"You astonish me," remarked the Colonel.

"Astonish! Excuse me, sir, but can't you see the utter incongruity of it? Why, it is scarcely possible to imagine a man of Macter's architectural standing submitting it."

"Well," said the Colonel, "I am sorry you do not like it. I may say at once that the design was made specially to suit my requirements, and operations will commence to-morrow."

Right was staggered. In the face of this decisive statement he did not know what to say.

"My dear sir," he at last jerked out, "it is impossible. I cannot permit it. The Duke would not allow it."

The Colonel crossed to his despatch-box, from which he took the Abbey agreement.

"As I have said before, Mr. Right, I am a busy man, and it will perhaps save time if I remind you of this clause." He read it out: "'The tenant to be at full liberty to add a room to his own purpose and convenience, if he so desires.'"

"But," Right gasped, "it was never expected that your addition would be a monstrosity. The natural inference was that you would make your addition in the original style. You said you would give it to a leading architect."

"For the inferences," said the Colonel, "I am not responsible. For the rest," he continued, "it is the only type of building which suits my purpose and convenience. Without it, the Abbey is not suitable for me, and without the clause which gives me a right to do as I please in the matter, I should not have taken the place, as you know. Come, come, Mr. Right, you are a business man. You can see that the matter is solely at my discretion. I have made up my mind, and I can afford to support it."

"It is impossible," said Right doggedly.

"Well, Mr. Right," said the Colonel, looking at his watch, "my lunch is waiting for me."

Right had been surveying the situation with swift thought. He was not without common sense, and he could see that Colonel Copp held the control.

"Will you," he said, "suspend matters for forty-eight hours?"

"I really do not see how I can. My instructions have been given, specifications sent out, etc., and the workmen will arrive at Belsire to-morrow morning. Further, I do not see the object of it."

Right got up from his chair as the Colonel walked towards the door. "Will you be in the hotel this afternoon?" he said.

"I shall be disengaged about six o'clock," replied the Colonel.

The Colonel went down to the grill-room, and the agent left the hotel. Right drove back to his office as quickly as a taxi could take him.

As soon as he got inside the doors he inquired the whereabouts of his partners. They were out at lunch.

"I am going to look for them," he said to the clerk. "If either Mr. Hank or Mr. Futley should return while I am away, ask him to stay in, as I wish to see them on important business."

At the first telegraph office he stopped the cab, went in, and sent a lengthy telegram to the Duke of Belsire, Paris.

That afternoon the partners of Messrs. Right, Hank, & Futley, estate agents, were inaccessible to the public.

By five o'clock it had been decided that the agreement with the Colonel must be cancelled at any cost.

A furiously-worded telegram from His Grace of Belsire was on the table.

"I do not suppose for one moment," said Futley, an old man with much experience and a well-balanced mind, "that the Duke will do other than disclaim all responsibility. The onus is legally with us. The clause in the agreement should at least have stipulated for our approval of plans. We've worried it out from every aspect, and the only thing to do is to make an offer for cancellation. Whoever loses, it must be done, and at any cost."

At six o'clock Mr. Right drove to keep his appointment with the Colonel.

At seven o'clock he drove away, plus the cancelled agreement and an invitation to a banquet, of which he did not avail himself, and—minus a check for ten thousand pounds.

When he had gone, the Colonel rang for his secretary. "Harris," he said, "I have decided, after all, that a country house is unnecessary for me." As he spoke, he sealed a long envelope into which had gone a pink slip and a small book. "Give that into the bank in the morning immediately it opens; and take down this letter to Mr. Macter:

"MY DEAR MR. MACTER:

"I have pleasure in enclosing a check for one hundred guineas in payment for sketch and plans submitted yesterday. I have decided not to proceed with the erection at present.

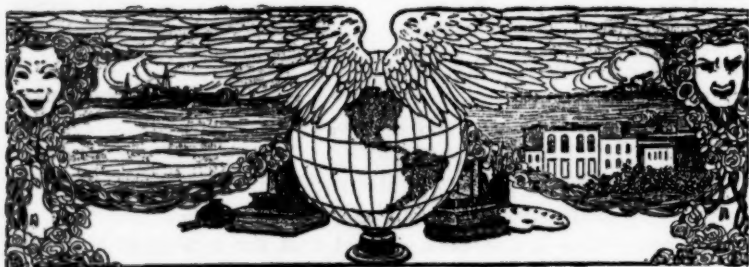
"Yours truly,

"JOB H. COPP."



A MAN may question your admiration of his wife, but of his mother—never!

It is thrice as clever never to say the wrong thing as always to say the right.



WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

IS man his brother's keeper? There is no doubt of that—when that brother misbehaves or becomes a menace to his brother-man. But the proper, or most nearly proper, manner of correcting, keeping, or repressing the erring one, of carrying on the endless war between the good and evil elements in society, has become a clamorous question of the times.

Prison reform in England, advocated by Secretary Winston Churchill, and inspired by John Galsworthy's play, "Justice"; the recent International Prison Conference at Baltimore; the equally international Crippen case, which has given us such an excellent example of English justice—its speed, dignity, and fairness; the abolition of the death penalty in Spain—in Spain of all countries!—a land which, only a year ago, did to death one of the most advanced thinkers of our day, Ferrer—all this declares that the question of crime and its proper penalties is a fiery and unsettled one.

Naturally—one might almost say, instinctively—the death penalty comes in for the greatest amount of doubt and censure, especially in our land, where, if not abolished, it is already practically suspended. The consequences may be said to be patent: a greater number of blood crimes to our name than any other people in the world. One of the favorite arguments against executions is that they do not deter. Is it apparent, then, that abolition of the penalty does deter, or that any law fulfils its purpose wholly?

Now and again, after some weary and sensational trial, there are found certain persons or societies rising in vehement protest against the law's decree of death upon the particular assassin in the toils. These good but unwise folk present long petitions clamoring for the abolishment of what they call "capital punishment." Both of these words, in this application, are misnomers. Capital punishment does not necessarily mean punishment by death. It means the heaviest sentence under the code. "Punishment," too, is a misused word, for the imposing of the penalty is not supposed to be punitive, but deterrent and corrective. The criminal who has forfeited his right to life or liberty serves his last useful purpose to society in being held up as a proof that the law still holds.

The most grievous wrong that could be inflicted upon civilized society is the protection of the criminal—in particular, the murderer—against the just decree of the law. They who maintain that the state has no right to take human life, or, as they miscall it, "revenge," forget that the felon himself has usually forfeited that claim by his crime. They forget that there is no law bidding him kill, but a mighty one warning him against it. They do not see that his immunity is a direct encouragement to his kind, and a dreadful menace to the lives of many innocent persons among whom he is permitted to range at large.

Always, where governments have been moved to a short-sighted policy of indiscriminate mercy and have abolished the death penalty, the result has been an enormous increase of crimes of violence throughout the land. The unprotected, the law-abiding, and the helpless have been sacrificed to the criminal classes and to these experiments of misguided humanitarians. After the recent abolishment of the death penalty in France, murders increased at a shocking rate, and now the wisest statesmen and most public-spirited journals have once more brought about the establishment of the guillotine, whose knife glitters steadily before the eyes of potential sons of Cain. In England, where the laws against murder are swiftly and rigorously enforced, the crime is comparatively rare. In our own land, the cowardice of juries and judges, the power of money to delay or frustrate the law, and a false and weak sentimentality bind up the sword of Justice. For this we pay a daily tribute of blood, misery, and money that ought to make us shudder.

A brilliant writer upon this subject has said that a man's first murder is his own, his second is ours. It is obvious that all murders are not necessarily the result of a criminal blood-lust; it is true that many unfortunate men, the slaves of sudden passion or the victims of great provocation, may be worthy of redemption. For them the law has provided by making the crime one that may be classified into

various degrees. For them, likewise, the benefit of the doubt, the easy interpretation of the law, the leniency of judges, and the soft-heartedness and often soft-headedness of juries, make sufficient allowance.

The fact that the abolition of the death penalty usually operates directly contrary to the claims of the advocates of abolition throws a sad and revealing light upon the baser instincts of man and upon the dangerous ignorance of most reformers. Let us hope that humanity, in its ceaseless upward struggle, may so perfect itself that the black fruit of the gallows-tree will put forth no more because the red seeds of murder will no longer sprout. Until that time comes, it shall, alas, be necessary for the common welfare to enforce that stern canon which gives ample warning, but which should fall firm and fast upon all who deliberately violate that first of laws, human and divine: "Thou shalt not kill."

HERMAN SCHEFFAUER

AMERICAN AND BRITISH ENUNCIATION

THE Scotch, English, and Irish have not our "dictionary habit."

It is not because they do not need it, but because they calmly follow a code of their own, pronouncing it good the while they mispronounce words, or at least pronounce them differently from Webster, Worcester, the Century, or any known authority. Said an L. L. A. of St. Andrew's University, Scotland, to the writer, "I never knew any one who would any more think of going to a dictionary for a pronunciation than to a 'Complete Letter Writer' for the model for a letter!" Said a Queen's College (Cork) professor, "Go to a dictionary to find out how to pronounce a word? I should never dream of such a thing!" Said an Englishman—an author of some repute—"I should consider it absurd to look in a dictionary to find out what to call a word."

The Yale professor who has lately related with astonishment that in five minutes he heard four words mispronounced by the speaker in Westminster Abbey shows by this comment that his sojourn in the United Kingdom was but brief. Otherwise, he would not have been even mildly surprised.

When we come to the correct enunciation of certain sounds necessary to the correct calling of the words in which these sounds occur, however, there is a different story to tell. With all the eagerness of the American nation to learn, it has not, as a whole, mastered these sounds. It can scarcely be a matter of laryngeal formation—as in the case of the native-born Australian, who, even with European-born parents, finds the monosyllable, c-o-w, too much for him as a general

thing—and it must therefore be attributed partly to ignorance and partly to carelessness.

Take the sounds of "e" and "i" in *America*, for instance, as well as the sound of the "a." Britons say that all Americans pronounce the appellation, *Uh-murr-ruh-kuh*, "somewhere down in the throat." We cannot deny the allegation, nor can we assert with honesty that our pronunciation of "u" in such words as *duke*, *suicide*, *constitution*—a pronunciation jeered at unmercifully by our transatlantic cousins—is impeccable. However, we are a new people, and will doubtless in time amend our ways—except, indeed, in the matter of nasality, which, being a dispensation of Providence, is strictly beyond our control. In the meantime we can console ourselves with the reflection that we furnish the United Kingdom with the best authorities for pronunciation to be found within her borders; at least, the authorities given as such by librarians in Britain all the way from John O'Groat's to Land's End, and in "John Bull's Other Island," from Londonderry to Cork.* That the inhabitants do not avail themselves of these means of illumination is both their misfortune and their fault. An educated Englishwoman with whom I lately discussed the subject of words stubbornly maintained that *iss-u*, *tiss-u*, *re-min-iscent*, *la-bor-atory*, *fan-atic*, *in-dis-sol-uble*, *e-fective*, *indis-pu-table*, *dev-il*, *e-vil*, were the pronunciations, respectively, of *issue*, *tissue*, *reminiscent*, *laboratory*, *fanatic*, *indissoluble*, *effective*, *indisputable*, *devil*, and *evil*. When asked her authority she hesitated a moment and then replied firmly, "Dr. Johnson." As in the ancient lexicon of her choice there are no pronunciations to be found, her answer is significant!

ELEANOR ROOT

THE DECLINE OF LURID MELODRAMA

WHERE are all the blood-and-thunder, rip-roaring melodramas that infested the cheaper theatres a few years ago? The overcrowded scenery store-houses, which are to be found in every large city, and are known to the theatrical producer as "morgues," mutely answer the question.

Drama in its higher forms will always occupy a firm place in theatricals. As long as the theatre exists, its followers will demand to see virtue, love, goodness, and honesty exploited, just as they will continue to welcome the vanquishing of the ruthless villain and the

* It may be mentioned that the age of dictionaries is not supposed, in King George's realm, to impair their usefulness. Thus in the Carnegie Library, Edinburgh, the only "unabridged" is dated 1886. In the same library, the Century Dictionary goes back to the first year of issue.

low ideals he represents. Heart-throbs in a play attract as strongly as rippling comedy, but naturalism must prevail: the deeper emotions cannot be superficially portrayed or lightly caricatured.

The melodrama of a few years past insulted the intelligence of its audiences. The people who constituted those audiences may not have possessed highly-cultured or analytical minds; but they did possess what the producer did not always credit them with—common-sense and a fair amount of reasoning power.

The producer argued: "I don't explain what I do, nor why I do it, for the audience would n't understand me if I did. With them ignorance is bliss." That was where he made his first mistake.

After a while, the patrons of cheap drama began to sit up and ask questions. They tried to reason out the impossible plots, situations, climaxes, and finales. They began to laugh at absurd scenes which were meant to inspire tears. The villain's machinations and the hero's hairbreadth rescues and escapes—often ludicrous and improbable—were humorously received. The followers of the cheaper drama had awakened.

Up to that time certain producers had been known to "put out" as many as twenty-five melodramas in one season. Now these same men, if they have remained in the field at all, restrict their output to three or four melodramas of a higher order. Originally it was "quantity"; now quality has the call.

The stage is an institution having untold possibilities for social uplift, as well as for educational advancement, but the public itself must be the censor.

Before the death-knell of cheap melodrama had been sounded, several play-houses in each large city were devoted to its exposition. A few remain, but their offerings are now of far more meritorious stamp; and, as a consequence, their patronage has been materially increased. The houses which were forced to succumb to the reform wave have in most instances adopted a lighter form of entertainment, consisting of vaudeville and motion pictures.

W. DAYTON WEGEFARTH

CORDIALITY

ANYBODY who attempts to associate the idea of cordiality with a cold boiled potato will understand why that quality is the politician's best friend and a gentleman's most attractive characteristic. Also, he will have a sudden illuminating insight into some of the conditions of American municipal politics, in which the politician is a permanent factor, and the gentleman a passing episode.

Politicians are not invariably dishonest, but they are invariably cordial, and an ounce of cordiality goes further with a majority of the electorate than a pound of municipal graft statistics. The gentleman in politics is likely to be handicapped by his lack of spontaneous cordiality, not because he is too haughty, but because he is not sufficiently effervescent. He does his best to be cordial, but the electorate sees him pumping—and there's the end of him.

For cordiality cannot be acquired in college, or even taught by mail from a correspondence school. It is an inherent characteristic. Blessed are those who are born with it, and worthy of all respect and admiration those who endeavor to acquire it by practice and patience. Its first element is toleration, and its second self-confidence. The gentleman cannot conscientiously tolerate the entire electorate, but the politician is happy in being able to tolerate anything—even a municipal investigation.

RALPH W. BERGENGREN

"THE SERVANT IN THE HOUSE"

EVERY housewife knows, as does her husband, that to get a servant who serves diligently these days is about as possible as to find a pot of gold in one's back yard. To get two reliable servants simultaneously would tax magic. There is, of course, a reason for this dearth. It has become the fashion to put all the blame upon the back of the hireling—which is a pity, for although there are many mistresses who are both just and kind, there are more who are neither.

It is complained, and justly, that the insolence of servants increases. But why? Obviously, because they have learned insolence in a bitter school. They are fighting their way alone. Between the average mistress and maid there waxes an eternal duel as to who shall get the better of the other.

"I am not going to do one stroke more than she said when she hired me," murmurs the maid as she falls into bed.

"I'll dock her for that broken cup," decides the drowsy mistress, and so it goes.

Between them flow the turbulent waters of antipathy. The "temperament" of the mistress is "temper" in the maid. If Milady is blue or ill, the Servant in the House must sympathize. If the maid is "blue" or "suffering," she is "grumpy," "lazy," or a "bore."

Fifty years ago things were not thus. The mistress and the maid were friends, without, be it remembered, one tinge of familiarity upon

the part of the latter. Their interest in the home was a common one. It was not merely another woman's house; it was the real home of the homeless maid until she married or died. She would have been ashamed to "change places" every few weeks, as does the average servant of to-day; she would have blushed to see anything left undone that her nimble fingers could do; as for the rest, a very modest wage sufficed her, because she valued a home.

Since good feeling is now practically impossible, the servant question should be strictly in accordance with business ethics. At present, so much service for so much money is indicated verbally, which agreement, as a rule, is honored in the breach. A "girl" for general housework should have a written contract, in which her duties should be clearly fixed, and her fines as well, for wilful laxity. So, all along the line of domestic service, business methods should prevail. Certain concessions on both sides may be made later. A maid's individual rights should be cheerfully accorded: her work is, as a rule, sordid and monotonous. Her bedroom should be plainly but cheerily furnished; well heated in winter, and bearable in summer. She should be allowed to see well-behaved women friends occasionally in that room after her working hours. If ill, her wages should go on as long as she remains in the house. She should be paid promptly, by the week or month as agreed upon; her "days out" as regularly given. Every member of the family should treat her with consideration and politeness. These things seem simple enough, nevertheless it is chiefly because such individual rights have been denied or ignored that those who have been just and kind cry aloud in vain for reliable "help."

MINNA THOMAS ANTRIM

DANGER AHEAD

SOME iconoclastic Congressman has been trying to introduce a measure leading to the installation of a summer White House. Instead of permitting the President, as heretofore, to roam at will during vacation time, it is proposed to sequester him in a particular place.

This apparently innocent suggestion seems to us to be fraught with danger. If it should be carried out, it might eventually lead to a summer government.

If a summer White House should be established, it would only be a beginning. We should soon have a summer capitol. This, of course, would lead to summer sessions of Congress. At present our only margin of safety is the fact that Congress is not in session all the year around.

It is true that a summer government might not necessarily be fatal. It could be located in a high place, presumably near a lake with fairly good fishing.

Congressmen who might otherwise be making speeches might be tempted away to fish or to do other things which a mountain resort offers.

But a summer government, even under these mitigating circumstances, would still be a menace.

The fact that Washington is so uncomfortable so much of the year as to make it imperative for the government to stop working, is one of the bulwarks of the Republic. Any attempt to continue it through the summer, even by locating the President in one spot as a beginning, ought to be sat upon at once.

THOMAS L. MASSON

RAILROAD ACCIDENTS

WE are often reminded in lugubrious statistics and heated orations that American railroads are peculiarly deadly to their passengers. We are told of the superior safety of European travel; and not infrequently we are told that drastic government supervision or even government ownership is necessary to put an end to the slaughter of passengers by the steel highways of America.

The contrast between American and European railroading is just a shade more than half true. The deductions from it are not true at all. Two-fifths of the American railroads have as good a record as the railroads of Europe in the matter of safety—and an infinitely better record in most other things.

There is one American railroad system which comprises 17,960 miles of rails. In the year 1910 it carried 49,491,000 passengers. Counting the average distance of the journey, this was equivalent to carrying 30,000,000,000 passengers one mile each. It was almost exactly ten per cent. of the entire railroad passenger traffic of the United States. Yet in 1910 this system did not cost the life of a single passenger.

This, mark you, was achieved under "American conditions"—those mysterious things which are so often invoked at the inquest. It was achieved without "government ownership"—that panacea so often proclaimed from the platform. The triumph of this great system was won through discipline, safety devices, and plain common-sense. It can be duplicated anywhere by the same commonplace things.

GEORGE L. KNAPP

THE LOST ARROW

By Jane Belfield

ALL that long summer day the little god had flitted among the rose garden of women; all day the sunlight had followed the trail of his wings, the red rose shed her perfume where his feet pressed the glad earth.

At even he paused within a green dell hidden in the wood of graces, where tall boughs bent above a garlanded shrine.

The little god stole near on tiptoe and shot—all but one—his quiver of pointed arrows at the forest shrine; but lo, the arrows of Eros glanced harmlessly aside!

"A shrine—and not to me? What god is worshipped here?" Eros lifted the trailing wreaths of blossoms white and green, and behold, the humbly garlanded altar was of rock!

Thereupon the little god would have flown above the shrine; but even as he sped, some power, strange, invincible, beat back his wings.

"Is there, then,"—Eros stood a moment with drooping pinions at the foot of the altar,—“a god stronger than I?”

And even as he spoke, she who tended the shrine came singing from the wood, her arms laden with blossoms green and white.

Quickly the little god arched his bow, for this maid was more beautiful than any who strayed in that fair wood of pleasure. But the forest maid smiled upon the golden boy, and threw a chain of posies over his sunny curls.

"Love captive!" she carolled in her voice of song.

"Then thou didst know that I am Eros?"

"Yea, Eros. What woman has not heard of thee?"

"Bare, then, thy heart! See, there is but one arrow in my quiver! Thou art woman."

"Yea, Eros; I am woman."

"Then loose thy robe. Wouldst thou not be loved?"

The maid's eyes lifted to the hanging boughs above the shrine.

"Yea, I would be loved, but—by the god I serve."

"But I will love thee—I, *Eros*! Hast thou not a single red rose to offer me? Woman, wouldst thou not be loved by the very god of love himself?"

But the maid knelt and hid her face among the blossoms white and green.

"My quiver is empty!" The little god threw the sheath upon the altar. "The last arrow is in my own breast. Tell me, who is this strange god that is more to thee than I?"

Then the maid rose and drew aside the curtain of boughs, and behold—two shining words deep graven upon the rock!

"Eros," she answered softly, "thou art very fair to look upon; and, ah, I know the breath of the rose is sweet. But methinks, after thy flight, I have heard a sound of weeping in the wood. Eros"—her finger pointed to the rock—"hast ever heard those words?"

The little god drew curiously near to read the words engraven there.

"Conscience?" he cried questioningly. "Responsibility? What words are these?"

And as Eros rose on butterfly wings, the eyes of the forest maid watched the last ray of sunlight caress his white body; and as the wood received him, she smiled—a little sadly—with her finger on her lip.



FAILURE

BY PAULINE CARRINGTON BOUVE

THEY say that this man failed.

Ah, well! Perhaps the dear God
Saw the purpose of his heart,
That, thwarted by stern circumstance—
A pawn within the careless hand

Of madcap chance—
Still held its dream apart,
And with a courage that ne'er quailed
Was always steadfast to some high ideal.

Ah, foolish world!
To keep within the soul true knowledge of the real
And straightway to pursue it for life's goal,
Though wealth and love and fame were missed upon the road,
Was not to fail!

THE PRICE OF VICTORY

By Frances Douglas

THE market-place in Culiacán was filled with the savory odors of coffee, mutton, chile-pepper, and garlic. When the light April wind blew in from the plaza a few blocks away it came laden with the heavy scent of the pink oleander, or the more delicate perfume of the golden flower of the acacia. From the booth beneath the spreading *guamúchil* tree where Juanita stood patting her tortillas, she caught the gleam of the dark red of a rich mass of bloom from the rose vine that had clambered up a brown adobe wall.

"As red as blood," said Juanita, her gaze wandering from the brilliant hue of flaming petals far down the cobble-paved street to the bronze-colored plain.

"What is as red as blood, *comadre*?" questioned her companion, Ramona, as she set a cup of coffee before a burly patron. He was a peon in an enormous hat, a blue denim suit of military cut, and wore a belt of long cartridges across his breast and over his left shoulder.

"Only the roses in Doña Petra's garden, *comadre*. I know not why they make me think of blood"—Juanita shivered—"and last night I dreamt of big black eyes."

"A bad sign, *comadre*."

The customer drank his coffee in loud sips, and with his sandalled foot kicked a dog that ventured close to gather up the crumbs that fell as he broke his corn tortilla.

"It is easy to think of blood these days," the soldier said gloomily. "*Mucha revolución*. The soil is being irrigated with blood of the revolution when we ought to be watering our gardens and cane-fields. Fighting in April will harvest hunger in December. I fear that next winter the children of the land will be as hungry as that cur."

Ramona bent above a pot steaming over a brazier and ladled out a savory stew red with tomato, spotted white with goat's-milk cheese, flecked green with onion stalk and shredded chile-pepper.

"The mothers will bring forth children in sorrow, and raise them in poverty," she said.

"The fathers will be lying in long trenches six feet underground," predicted the Federal.

"*Ay! la revolución!*" The sigh seemed echoed along the booths.

"*Mucha revolución,*" the soldier repeated, as he politely emptied his coffee-grounds on the pavement, and returned his cup, plate, and tin spoon to Ramona, who was smiling on her next customer, a hack-driver, who ordered coffee, beans, meat, and tortillas.

The crowd began to thicken around the booths in the market-place. Housewives were buying their supplies for the day. A man driving wood-laden donkeys stopped for a breakfast, while a boy with a burro bearing a leather water-sack, with bullock-horn faucets, balanced on either side, stopped to partake of papaws and *guamúchil* beans. Chickens with their legs tied together panted beneath little awning-covered tables while awaiting a servant from one of the fine mansions, who would soon bargain for them and convert them into stew. Children swarmed on every side; pigs trotted about; parrots chattered in cages; carriages whirled by; clerks hastened past to raise their Persian blinds and let the morning sun in through the grilled windows.

Suddenly fresh life seemed to be added to the market gossip.

"The soldiers are returning to the city. A victory is won; sixty Maderistas have been killed; a hundred horses have been captured; and the Federals are marching back to the city. Sundown will see them at the river," was the message brought in by a runner and flashed from booth to booth.

Juanita trembled with joy. The saints be praised! With her share of the day's earnings she would buy candles to burn before Our Lady of Guadalupe in token of her gratitude. Juan was coming back! Three days the fight had lasted—a fight in which Porfiristas and Maderistas had aimed their Mausers at cousins, brothers, or sons who fought on the other side. For three days guards had stood on the church and in the highest arches of the tall towers, straining their eyes to the north. The officials in the government palace and the youths in the post and telegraph offices had been under the strain of knowing that if the rebels won they must flee or die, as had died many others in towns that had been taken by the *revoltosos*. The Federals were coming back victorious! Officers' wives crowded into the churches to render prayers of gratitude; but Juanita could not leave patting her tortillas, for in these early morning hours she and Ramona took in most of their copper and silver coins for the day. She stood slapping the dough with her fingers, turning it deftly between her palms until it was a perfect disc, baking it on the hot clay plaque, with her thoughts far away in the past when José went out to fight the Yáquis. He had never come back, and when little Juan would ask about his father Juanita would weep.

"We are left alone, my little son. Our Lady of Guadalupe, she who protects the Indian women, will keep us."

"When I get big I will take care of thee, *mamita*. I will work in

the cane-fields, and all my earnings shall be for thee. Then I'll buy thee a pretty silk *rebozo* with long bright fringes."

One day the *rurales* surprised some men out in the mountains roasting meat over a fire. These mounted police, who scour the hills, were not satisfied in regard to the brand on the cow-skin pegged out on the ground, and shot the men on suspicion. So Ramona was left alone, and she and Juanita became partners in the little lunch-booth in the market-place. Juan grew to be a sturdy youth. He worked leisurely on the ranches or in the cane-fields, and he was the joy of Juanita's heart. How she trembled when the women in the market-place whispered to her that Juan had a sweetheart; that he was often seen talking through the iron-barred window to the daughter of old Pedro, who watered the flowers in the plaza. Then for the first time she realized that Juan was almost a man. But Juan should not take that slender-waisted little thing to wife! Juan needed a stout girl of the ranches to grind corn for his tortillas, to milk his goats, to wash his gay shirts and his white cotton trousers on the stones down by the river-bank.

No, Maria Gracia was not the girl Juan should marry. Now that he was coming home, she would pick out the right kind of a wife for him, a girl with broad shoulders and stout waist—*comadre* Ramona's daughter, Lupita! Dreaming, she patted tortillas all the morning and until the clock on the church struck twelve, when the crowd thickened around the lunch-booth; and then came one, two, three, four, five! At sunset the Federals would enter the city. Juan was coming back; baby Juan grown to be a man and a soldier! With his pay maybe he would buy his *mamita* that pretty silk *rebozo* with long bright fringes.

Juanita flung her faded black shawl over her head and across her left shoulder, and started for the bridge. The whole town was turning out to meet the victorious colonel and his men. Juan was a veteran! He had smelled the smoke of battle, and now he was a real warrior. As a baby, he had never known fear, and how did Juanita know what brave deeds he might not have done? On the bridge waited the school-master and all his pupils; women with children, and men and boys, were swarming everywhere; gentlemen came in carriages; the Governor and his retinue; girls in white, their dainty scarfs floating in the breeze; mothers, wives, and daughters of the officers. Down on the river-bank, under the bridge, old Indian women were rubbing clothing on the stones. A fragrance of sugar from the mill filled the air. Men with spy-glasses mounted the bridge timbers. They discerned a long, slender column approaching. A cloud of dust as from an enormous herd of sheep rose into the sky above the line of horsemen. Stern *rurales* in bright costumes sat motionless on their stout steeds, gazing to the north. A carriage filled with young girls bearing flowers drove up to the bridge. Juanita noticed the roses, roses the color of blood—and she had dreamed

of eyes last night—eyes big and black. Juanita was pressed back with the crowd by the guards in their tall hats.

"Make way for the victorious colonel and his soldiers!"

They were coming.

First filed past, it seemed to Juanita, a mile of men in blue denim and tall yellow hats, the reserve force that had tramped out to meet the veterans. Then an advance guard, and an orderly bearing the national banner wreathed in flowers; next the young colonel, erect, his sword held at salute, radiant, receiving the hand-clapping, the *vivas*, the bowing, the reward of his hard campaign. After the Governor had embraced him, the girls with the flowers pressed around and offered the victor a wreath—roses the color of blood, white lilies, green leaves—the tricolor of their country's flag. Bands were playing the national hymn: "Never again shall thy sons shed blood in contest of brother against brother,"—"War! War! The pennants of the *patria* are soaked in waves of blood,"—"War! War! In the mountain, in the valley, thunder the cannons!"—"Thy fields are irrigated with blood,"—"May thy sanguinary triumphs change to garlands of myrtle and rose," sang the instruments. The colonel passed on, surrounded by a company of officials; Juanita's eyes strained down the long line of dusty soldiers that rode, grim and silent, behind their leader. The applause was for the colonel, not for them. Out there on the scorching plain they had looked into the gray face of death, uncertain whether they would ever again behold the clear waters of the Tamazula and the green cottonwoods on its banks. Their guns hung at their sides; their cartridge-belts over their breasts were full of long steel messengers of death. The women who had accompanied their men on the campaign trudged beside the horses, more dusty, silent, and weary than the riders. Some of them carried babies on their backs, like mother scorpions. Juanita knew many of them, but she barely nodded to them. She was looking for Juan.

A quarter of the column passed; half of it swept by; three-quarters of the cavalcade rode over the bridge with loud hollow clatter of hoofs on the boarding. Juanita's heart sank as she saw that some horses were riderless, but Juan—Juan must be in the last division! Juan was coming home to-day—baby Juan, who had grown to be a man and a soldier! Juanita was going to give her consent to his taking a wife as soon as he would, not the slender Maria Gracia—there she was in her dainty gown, waving her hand at a young lieutenant—but Lupita, who was craning her neck down the line, as was Juanita. Clank, clank! sounded the iron shoes on the bridge. Juanita's thoughts seemed to keep time with the hollow tramping. She saw the red roses; she had dreamed of big eyes last night. Clank, clank! only a few more horses to pass over now—Juan must be among the very last. The soldiers seemed to turn away their heads as they rode past her. The women hurried by without

stopping. The breeze wafted the sound of the music to her ears—"Every son a soldier, every soldier a hero!" chanted the brasses. The last horsemen passed by Juanita, and one of them was leading a steed with an empty saddle. . . .

Juanita had paid her price for the victory.



THE DEATH OF 'FRISCO RED

BY ALFRED DAMON RUNYON

UNDER the wheels of the fast express as it slid down Raton Pass
Me ole pal 'Frisco Red was caught, an' churned to a shapeless
mass.

As I knelt by him in a bank o' snow, his eyes were opened wide,
An', so help me Bob! he spoke to me, an' he said before he died:

*"Has the good Christ passed on the record you took to Him o' me,
Kathleen?*

*Has He said that I might sit by you, with my soul washed white an'
clean?*

*Oh, what has He said o' my deeds o' blood an' the sins that I've had
to do?*

Are they offset by the way I've held in my faith an' my love for you?"

Yeggman, kegman, tough guy, Red; it seems to me yet that I dreamed
O' hearin' him speak the words I heard, while the switch-lights softly
streamed

Like little stars through the bars o' snow on the top o' the Raton Pass,
An' 'Frisco Red lay a-dyin' there an' drooled o' some kid-time lass.

*"Has the dear Christ listened to what you've told o' the good in me,
Kathleen?*

*Oh, it was n't much but my love for you—still, that was pure an' clean;
It has been my anchor through all the years; my claim on the throne
o' grace;*

*An' I go in the hope that I've earned the right to look once more on
your face."*

Yeggman, kegman, tough guy, Red; an' that's the way that he died
Where the switch-lights gleam on Raton Pass, an' the headlights swiftly
glide;

An' I would n't believe it from any one else, but that's what I heard
an' seen,

As I left him makin' his peace up there with his God an' his Kathleen.

WHAT HAPPENED TO JACKSON

By M. M. Hoover

TUSCOLA, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
9 A.M.

(Prepaid.)

DICKSON, HARMS & Co.,
CHICAGO, ILL.

Wire funds quick. Lost wallet. Have only one dollar.
Rush.

JAMES R. JACKSON,
Union Station.

(Prepaid.)

CHARLES P. JACKSON,
OAK TERRACE,
ROSELANDS, ILL.

TUSCOLA, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
9 A.M.

Think I lost wallet in Roselands station. Worried. Search.
Reply.

JAMES R. JACKSON,
Union Station.

ROSELANDS, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
9.15 A.M.

JAMES R. JACKSON,
UNION STATION,
TUSCOLA, ILL.
(Collect.)

Found wallet in station. Sent to wife. Don't worry.
CHARLIE.

ROSELANDS, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
9.20 A.M.

JAMES R. JACKSON,
UNION STATION,
TUSCOLA, ILL.
(Collect.)

Hear you lost wallet. Do you need funds? Don't worry.
FATHER.

What Happened to Jackson

ROSELANDS, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
9.30 A.M.

JAMES R. JACKSON, (Collect.)
UNION STATION,
TUSCOLA, ILL.

Wallet found. Shall I send it? Don't worry. Lovingly
yours, MARGARET.

TUSCOLA, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
9.30 A.M.

(Collect.)

DICKSON, HARMS & Co.,
CHICAGO, ILL.

Please rush funds. Am in great difficulty. Rush. Rush.
Rush. JACKSON.

ROSELANDS, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
9.50 A.M.

(Collect.)

JAMES R. JACKSON,
UNION STATION,
TUSCOLA, ILL.

Why don't you answer? Do you want funds? Answer
immediately. FATHER.

ROSELANDS, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
10.20 A.M.

(Collect.)

JAMES R. JACKSON,
UNION STATION,
TUSCOLA, ILL.

Why don't you answer? Am worried nearly sick. Please
answer. MARGARET.

TUSCOLA, ILL.,
MARCH 1, 1911.
10.30 A.M.

(Official Business.)

DICKSON, HARMS & Co.,
CHICAGO, ILL.

Man claiming to represent you has had fit in station
here after argument with operator. What shall we do with
him? STATION AGENT,
Union Station.

FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF

Edward Sherwood Meade, Ph.D.

WHAT CHANCE HAS A "LAMB" IN THE STOCK MARKET?

COMPLAINTS are rife in all brokerage houses over the extreme dulness in business. The "public" are not buying stocks. Brokers are reduced to the expedient of living upon one another. Meantime expenses continue, and there is no relief in sight. "For this condition," said a veteran broker, "the muckraking magazines are responsible. They have denounced Wall Street and Wall Street methods so persistently and with such violence of statement that the people have come to look on the term 'Banker and Broker' with suspicion. They do not want to trust brokers with the money. They feel that they will not be treated fairly. They do not believe that the Wall Street game is honest."

"Is it honest?" he was asked. "Are the people correct in their opinions? What about this criticism of the financial game? Do you believe there is anything in it?"

"Well," he replied, "I'll tell you my own opinion: the people are pretty nearly right. There's nothing in the game for them except excitement and worry and loss. If a man sticks to the stock-market game long enough, he will lose, and while he is playing it, unless he is careful, he will be made the victim of some trick of manipulation which will take his money away from him, without giving him a run for it. Of course it's my living. I like the business. I try to be fair to my customers. I know I am honest with them, but sometimes, when I stop to think, I'm sorry for them. They have n't a chance."

Such candor is refreshing and unusual. Read the solemn editorials in the newspapers when it is proposed to abolish or restrict the stock exchange. Note the indignation with which any such proposals are received. Without the stock exchanges and the brokers, we are assured, business could not be carried on. It is true that there are abuses. Foolish men speculate to their ruin. Occasionally a broker turns rogue and makes a dishonest failure, or speculates for his own account with

the money of his customers. But these are only incidents, we are told. They furnish no reason for the overthrow of a great and beneficent institution, or even for hampering or seriously interfering with its operations. Through the stock exchange, it is further argued, capital is mobilized, brought together in great masses for railroads and subways. The buying and selling of the brokers for their customers and for themselves establish the values of stocks and bonds. The stock exchange discounts future events. If the corn crop is threatened by drought, down go the prices of Western railroad stocks. If a trust is threatened with attack, the stock exchange knows before any one else, and the ticker tells the story. Without the stock exchange, the banks could not make loans on collateral with any safety, since they would have difficulty in finding a quick market in case it became necessary to sell.

These are strong statements. They have high authority to support them. They are not to be questioned without the production of strong evidence that they are overdrawn. Certainly they will not be questioned here.

While, however, we may recognize the stock exchange and the members thereof as public benefactors, indispensable parts of the intricate plan of things as they are, it is well to look at the situation of the man or the woman who contributes so largely to the maintenance of the institution, the margin speculator. It is the speculator who pays most of the commissions, and the commissions build the exchanges, pay the rents of the brokers' offices, maintain the costly private wires, and support the modest establishments of the thousands of men who get their living from the business. The bills for all this are heavy, and the speculator pays them. What does he get for his money?

First let us clearly understand the nature of margin speculation as carried on through a stock exchange house. You, let us say, are a merchant. You have a good bank balance or some sound investments. You believe that some standard railway stock—let us call it "Standard"—is too low at par. You think the price will advance. You resolve to take advantage of the rise. You secure an introduction to a broker. How glad he is to see you—especially in times like these. You give him an order to buy 500 shares of "Standard," costing \$50,000. Now, you do not have \$50,000. Your available resources are only \$5,000. But this is no barrier to the transaction. Your broker is also a banker. He will

lend you the difference between \$5,000 and \$50,000, and will buy the 500 shares for you, providing you will leave the stock on deposit with him to secure the loan. So the purchase is made. You give the broker \$5,000 in cash or securities. He borrows \$45,000 from a bank or trust company, and buys 500 shares of "Standard," as he notifies you, "for your account and risk."

I once heard a broker describe the resulting situation and its developments as follows:

Says the broker to his customer, or "client": "You own 500 shares of 'Standard,' costing \$50,000, and worth \$50,000 to-day. Of this \$50,000, \$5,000 is your money, and \$45,000 is my money. Suppose, now, that the price of 'Standard' goes up 10 points. Your 500 shares are worth \$55,000. Of this \$55,000, \$10,000 is your money and \$45,000 is my money. You have made \$5,000."

Suppose, now, that you have had enough for the present. You have vindicated your judgment of "Standard's" value. You have a good opinion of yourself. You decide to rest on your oars and take your profits. You order your broker to sell. Your account with your broker stands like this:

John Jones in account with Smith & Company, Bankers and Brokers.

Dr.		Cr.	
To loan	\$45,000	To 500 shares "Standard"	\$55,000
To int., 1 mo., 6%	225		
To commission, 1%....	125		
	<hr/>		
	45,350		
Balance,	9,650		
	<hr/>		
	\$55,000		<hr/>
			\$55,000

The broker now gives you, if you want it, a check for \$9,650, your original \$5,000 and \$4,650 additional. You are a successful speculator. Life is sweet.

Now reverse the situation. "Standard" does not go up. It goes down. The grasshopper, or the hot wind, or the legislature, or the Interstate Commerce Commission, moves on the "Standard." "Standard" common is "weak." It goes down 2 points. Comes now your broker and says to you, in effect, something like this: "You own 500 shares of 'Standard.' These shares are worth to-day \$49,000. Of this \$49,000, \$45,000 is my money and \$4,000 is your money." Suppose the hot wind blows on, and "Standard" goes down three points more. Again your broker confronts you: "Your 500 shares are worth only \$47,500. Of this sum \$45,000 is my money and \$2,500 is your money.

I have these shares pledged at the bank as collateral for the \$45,000 I borrowed for you. The bank demands more security. I'm sorry, but I must have more 'margin'; about \$1,000 will be sufficient." So you give the broker \$1,000 more, and if "Standard" keeps on descending you give him another \$1,000, and another. You must keep his security safe. He must always have \$45,000 out of the value of your stock.

Now suppose you cannot meet these calls for margin. Suppose "Standard" goes down 10 points in a single day—not an unusual thing—and you cannot raise the money for margins. You are sold out—your broker sells your 500 shares of "Standard," at the best price he can get, if he is honest—if he is dishonest, at the lowest price of the day—and sends you this statement.

John Jones in account with Smith & Co., Bankers and Brokers.

Dr.		Cr.	
To loan	\$45,000	To 500 shares "Standard"	
To interest	225	at 92	\$46,000
To commission	125		
Bal. due Jones	650		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	\$46,000		\$46,000

You have lost \$4,350 perhaps in a single day. This is margin speculation. This is what keeps the brokers' offices going.



There are two questions to ask about speculation. First, is this the only way to speculate? and second, what is the chance of profit in speculation?

There was a stock exchange house in a large city, which was supposed to be impregnable. The firm was reported to have ample capital. The members were popular and respected. One morning this firm closed its doors. Its liabilities were enormous; most of its assets had disappeared. No explanations were forthcoming. The creditors were called together and informed that for family reasons relatives would make up most of the shortage, provided there was no prosecution. Another house, in the same city, failed about the same time. It may pay to unsecured creditors ten cents on the dollar.

Cases like these usually involve breaches of trust between broker and client. You give the broker your money to secure him in borrowing a much larger amount of money with which to buy 500 shares of "Standard" stock for you. You leave the stock with him as security

for your loan, but it is still your stock. The law says that your broker must hold it for you. He can pledge it at the bank, but he must pledge it for your benefit, so that whenever you want to pay the balance due you can have the stock. If your broker pledges this stock for his own benefit, or in any way puts it out of his power to deliver you these 500 shares when you come for them, the laws of some states—notably New York—say he is guilty of larceny. If your broker obeys the law and keeps your securities for you, he may, indeed, fail in business. His own funds may be eaten up in speculation for his own account, or in expenses, but, except in a severe and sudden panic when stocks could be sold only at ruinously low prices, his failure would disclose no “unsecured creditors”; no one would lose except himself.

When you deal with a broker on this basis of depositing margin, you depend absolutely on his good faith or his fear of the law. If he chooses to use the stocks which belong to you for his own benefit, you cannot stop him, for as long as he remains solvent you will know nothing about the matter. There is no adequate supervision of brokerage houses. They are all partnerships. There is no bank examiner to go over their books. The customers are largely at their mercy. Considering their opportunities, it is a rare tribute to their high character that so few of them have proven unfaithful to their trust.

A safe method of margin speculation can be suggested, a method available to any one with a substantial bank account. If you have faith in the “Standard,” if you believe it is going up, if you are not content with the profits on 50 shares which you have the money to buy and pay for, if you want the profits on a large number of shares, go to your banker. Give him your order. He will lend you 80 per cent. on any “Standard” stock which you may own, and he will buy the stock for you through some broker, charging you only the broker’s commission. You cannot buy quite so many shares through your banker, but in all other respects the transaction to you is the same as though you had dealt through the “banker and broker.” The bank buys the stock for you. You pay the bank \$5,000. You sign a note for the balance of the purchase price. It is your stock. The certificate is made out in your name. Your note is pinned to the certificate, it goes along with it. The bank does not use your stock for its own purposes, for the bank is a public institution, a corporation with a regular organization. Whatever it does must be known to the officers or directors. Its accounts are published. It is subject to the inspection of the bank examiners. You may feel certain that when you buy stock on margin through your bank, you may lose your money, it is true, but your loss will be the result of your own bad judgment and not the fault of a broker.

What are the chances of profit in speculation? They are poor, very poor, almost negligible. Space does not permit at this time any extended discussion of the reasons why the margin speculator has practically no chance. Let two cases suffice where speculation on the most positive information went wrong. Many years ago a large Eastern railroad was in trouble. It was a large producer of coal which it sold through agents. One firm of agents had positive information, which came to them in the course of business, that bankruptcy was inevitable. They knew it, and subsequent events proved that they were right. The company did fail. They resolved to take advantage of this knowledge in the stock market. They raised \$30,000, all the money they could get together, and they sold this stock short on a 10 point margin. That is to say, their brokers made a contract with certain other brokers to lend them 15,000 shares of this stock, and they agreed to deliver 15,000 shares on demand. This stock they sold for \$300,000, leaving the \$300,000 together with the original \$30,000 with the broker to secure the transaction. They expected that the stock would drop to 10, then they would order the broker to buy 15,000 shares, which would cost only \$150,000; return the shares to the brokers from whom they had borrowed, and return to them the difference between \$300,000 and \$150,000 as the profit less the brokers' charges. They would also get back their \$30,000.

Now observe. The information was accurate. The railroad company was in a bad way. It did fail—later. Its stock did drop, not only to 10 but to 5—later. At the time, however, certain powerful and wealthy men decided to put the price of this stock up, and by heavy buying they did put it up to 25. Our friends the coal dealers were caught in the rise. Their broker was asked to return the 15,000 shares. He bought these shares at 22, costing \$330,000. The \$30,000 was gone. The firm failed, and it was no comfort to them that the railroad failed soon after.



One more instance. A prominent attorney was employed by certain stockholders to bring suit to dissolve a large company whose stock was active on the exchange. The announcement of the suit was sure, as he thought, to break the price of the stock. So he raised \$15,000 and sold the stock short. Now, mark, his information was accurate. He had himself drawn the papers. He was himself to file them. He was to give out the news. The news would break the price of the stock at least 10 points. He was certain to double his money. The stock was sold at ten o'clock, immediately after the opening of the exchange. At noon announcement was made that this company would be merged with others

into a large company. The suit was withdrawn. Immediately the stock advanced. The lawyer was fortunate to escape with the loss of half his investment.

Here are two cases where shrewd and intelligent men, "on the inside," possessed of accurate and exclusive information, tried to turn their knowledge into money and failed. Such cases are not exceptional. The wisest speculator this country ever produced said that he was satisfied to be right four times out of seven. The speculator of average intelligence and good fortune can be sure of one thing, that if he sticks long enough he will lose all he puts in.

I do not wish to be understood as saying that it is not possible to buy stocks with borrowed money when prices are low, and profit by the advance. This is possible and not attended with serious risks if the purchaser is careful to maintain large margins for his loans, if he buys dividend paying stocks, the income on which will offset the interest on his loans, and if he is satisfied to wait. I do not, personally, believe that there is very much risk in the purchase of sound railroad stocks on this basis. Eventually, it may be after the lapse of years, it is true, but some day, the purchase will show a profit. But for the margin speculator, the trader, who buys and sells on tips and rumors, who is in and out of this or that stock, against whom 6 per cent. interest is always running, and who must pay \$25 on every block of 100 shares, for the great army of the "public," the people who pay the brokers' bills, who keep the institution running, there is a certainty of just one thing, eventual and total loss.

A broker once told me that there was one rule which he would give, if he dared, to his customers to guide them in selecting stocks for trading purposes: "Take a piece of chewing-gum. Reduce it to an adhesive condition, mould it into a form convenient for throwing. Throw it at the board. Buy or sell the stock indicated by the spot on the board to which it adheres. Go to Europe for three months." By following this advice, he said, the customer would have a chance—not much of a chance, it is true, but some chance. If, however, he reads the financial page of the newspaper, and listens to the gossip in the brokers' offices, he has not even the gambler's chance, since he will be doing exactly what the powers back of the market want him to do in order that they may as quickly as possible get his principal before it is exhausted by the constant nibbling of the broker.

A well-to-do man showed his ingénue bride a check for \$1,800. "Do you see this check? Now with this I'm going to buy sugar. Sugar is going up, and I'll give you the profits." Sugar went down, and he lost his \$1,800. The lady asked for an accounting. "My dear, sugar went down. The money is lost." "And you have n't even any sugar?" she asked plaintively. "Not even any sugar?"

It will be well for the American people if the present dulness in brokerage circles, in so far as this dulness represents increasing knowledge of the pitfalls of margin speculation, shall continue. As a means of making money, it is worthless. As a means to loss and ruin, it has no rivals. With the large number of sound investments constantly offered by banking houses to the public, on terms which offer a reasonable chance of increasing value, together with security of principal and income, it should no longer be necessary for men and women to put their savings into margins.



LIKE OTHER BIRDS

BY BOLTON HALL

THE Bluebird complained to the farmer that her nest had been robbed.

The farmer reached for his gun. "Describe the robber," he said. "He shall be punished, if I can find him."

"You'll have no trouble finding him, for I saw him at his work," sobbed the Bluebird. "Everybody knows him. He is a monster with wicked eyes that bulge out from a cruel-looking face. He has an enormous bill that could take me in whole, and would hold several of my eggs at once; broad claws that could grasp a tree trunk; and a raucous voice that strikes terror to the heart."

"Surely," said the farmer, "it will be very easy to find him."

All day the Bluebird waited impatiently. When the farmer came at night he brought no trophy with him.

"Where is the robber?" cried the Bluebird.

"I could not find him," answered the farmer. "There are no strangers in the community, and, though I asked even the Crow, none could tell me of this strange bird."

"The Crow?" screamed the Bluebird. "Why, it was the Crow himself!"

"The Crow?" repeated the farmer, in astonishment. "Why, I did not recognize him from your description."

"Bah!" said the Bluebird. "Only the robbed know how the robber really looks."



AT THE FRONT

The fusillade was furious. In the excitement of the battle the troops on both sides were firing indiscriminately in all directions, until in the madness of the moment the conflict became positively dangerous to human life. From any point of view it was difficult to decide which of the contending armies was getting the better of the *mêlée*. At one moment victory seemed about to perch on the banners of one side, and then by some sudden and inexplicable turn of the wheel of fortune it appeared to hover over the standards of the other. In one corner of the field an indiscriminate scrimmage was in progress that blanched the cheeks of the oldest football reporter among the war-correspondents in their private box to the left of the scene of carnage. The commanding officers of both forces, with a bravery unparalleled in the annals of war, were running to and fro at the rear of the firing line, prodding their men into action with the tip ends of their swords, and now and then stimulating them to greater activity with a resounding whack with the flat sides thereof, exhorting them meanwhile with well chosen terms into a final charge. It was a moment of passion, and the correspondents stood watching the fray, their eyes fixed with a horrible fascination upon the shambles which the battle-field had become, when suddenly with a wild cry of wrath a tall, slim figure emerged from the wood that stood upon the slope off to the east. His hat had blown off in the swift progress that he made toward the centre of the field, and his arms waved wildly as he came on. Those who could hear him above the din of battle aver that he was using language at every step that should not be permitted to sully the lily whiteness of the virgin page even of a yellow journal.

Seeing his wild charge, the two commanders paused in their exhortations to their men and approached him, and then occurred

Walnuts and Wine

the dreadful incident that makes the battle of Pinto Quarto del Twelvemo unique on the pages of History. Seizing one commander by the nape of his neck and the other by his collar, the onrushing intruder banged the heads of the two generals together so hard that the distant hills echoed with the sound of the impact.

"There, gol-ram ye!" he cried, as the two officers dropped senseless to the ground from the force of their supra-occipital impact. "I told ye before ye started this muss not to let these greasers of yours shoot in the direction of my camery. You've broke forty dollars' worth o' films, and this here war's got to stop until I can git a new lot in from San Antone."

And with that the intrepid photographer held up his hand between the contending forces, and ordered an armistice of four days, until a new lot of supplies could be obtained to replace those so carelessly destroyed by the thoughtless shooting of both Federals and Insurrectos.

Horace Dodd Gastit

THE DIFFERENCE

By John D. Wells

When I was just a country lad
And you a country lass,
We dreamed not of the meadows fair,
Nor of the rustic glories there;
We heard no music in the song
The plowman warbled all day long;
We found no whit of sentiment
In those old days of sweet content,
When I was just a country lad
And you a country lass.

When I was just a country lad
And you a country lass,
Had some acquaintance dared imply
The time would come when you and I
Would go completely mad and pay
A hundred dollars per to stay
Where skeeters bite and frogs "Joor-rum-m-p"
We'd shunned him for a crazy chump!—
When I was just a country lad
And you a country lass.

Walnuts and Wine

ACCOMMODATION

It was eight-thirty, and the theatre was crowded.

"What have you left?" a prospective purchaser inquired of the treasurer.

"How many, sir?" the treasurer asked.

"Two."

"I have two left in the twelfth row," the treasurer said, taking the tickets from the rack. "They're the last two seats I have in the house."

"How much?" the other asked cautiously.

"Two dollars," was the reply.

"Two dollars!" the patron repeated. "I can't stand for that."

"Well, will you stand for a dollar?" the ticket dispenser inquired.

"Gladly," the other cried, scenting a bargain, and laying a dollar on the ledge.

The treasurer replaced the two tickets in his rack, and handed out two others, after placing the bill in his cash-drawer.

"There they are, sir," he said. "First door to your right."

The man hurried inside and "stood" for a dollar. The wily treasurer, taking him at his word, had sold him two admission tickets.

W. Dayton Wegfarth

WHAT IS A FARMER?

Assistant Secretary Willet M. Hays, of the Department of Agriculture, has a definition which distinguishes between a farmer and an agriculturist. He attributes it, however, to former Secretary Rusk of the Department.

A farmer, according to this definition, is a man who makes his money on the farm and spends it in town. An agriculturist is a man who makes his money in town and spends it on the farm.

W. A. Du Puy

AT THE SIDE-SHOW

Ticket-Taker: "I hear that two-headed boy comes from Utah."

Proprietor: "Well, we'll advertise him as a Mormonstrosity."

C. B. D.

QUITE SO

Select your wife on a Choose-day, and marry on a Weddin's-day.

La Touche Hancock

Walnuts and Wine

AVIATION

By Harold Susman

I tried this Aviation,
Of which so much we've heard;
Oh, glorious sensation,—
bird!

a

like

I rose up

I'm done with Aviation,
A thing at which to mock;
Oh, horrid consternation,—
I came down
like

a

rock!

✱

VIRGINIA'S PRINCIPAL CROP

The late Fitzhugh Lee was a loyal Virginian, and would see this prolific mother of Presidents deposed by no one, so the choice of him to introduce Grover Cleveland, who was to make an address at the historic University of Virginia, resulted in some mirth.

"Mr. President," he began graciously, "we are honored in welcoming you to Virginia to-day, both as a loyal Democrat and as the President of these United States. 'T is long since we have had a President with us." Then, fearing such adulation might turn Mr. Cleveland's head, he warmed to his *real* subject and added, to the delight of his audience, "But the time *has* been, suh, when we could go out on this very old rotunda porch and holler, 'Mr. President!' and the woods would be *full* of them!"

N. L.

✱

THE WAY OF A GIRL

Spoonleigh: "Does your sister always look under the bed?"

Her Little Brother: "Yes, and when you come to see her she always looks under the sofa."

J. J. O'Connell

✱

LITERAL JOHNNY

Neighbor: "Johnny, I think in looks you favor your mother a great deal."

Johnny: "Well, I may look like her, but do you tink dat 's a favor?"

M. L. Hayward

Walnuts and Wine

A NEW ONE ON HER

There was recently presented to a newly-married young woman in Baltimore such a unique domestic proposition that she felt called upon to seek expert advice from another woman, whom she knew to possess considerable experience in the cooking line.

"Mrs. Jones," said the first mentioned young woman, as she breathlessly entered the apartment of the latter, "I'm sorry to trouble you, but I *must* have your advice."

"What is the trouble, my dear?"

"Why, I've just had a 'phone message from Harry, saying that he is going out this afternoon to shoot clay pigeons. Now, he's bound to bring a lot home, and I haven't the remotest idea how to cook them. Won't you please tell me?" *Taylor Edwards*



REASSURING THE PROFESSOR

A professor of Yale University, who was one of a party which undertook to penetrate the depths of a Nevada mine, for scientific purposes, relates a startling incident in connection therewith.

During the professor's ascent in the ordinary manner, by means of a bucket, and with a miner as a fellow-passenger, the scientist perceived symptoms of a weak place in the rope.

"Do you often change your ropes, my good man?" he asked, when about half-way from the bottom of the abyss.

"We change 'em every three months," was the reassuring reply of the man in the bucket, "and we change this one to-morrow, if we get up safe to-day." *Elgin Burroughs*



A BIT OF ENGLISH HUMOR

The night train was approaching Blackheath, outside of London, and two Americans, unacquainted with the locality, were in doubt as to the station. One peered out through the window into the unresponsive darkness and sank back to his place. The other did precisely the same.

"Is it Blackheath?" inquired the first.

"The Lord only knows," replied the other in hopeless fashion.

A small, apologetic, shrinking sort of Englishman, sitting next, spoke up.

"I beg your pardon," he said softly, "for intruding upon your personal and private conversation, but as I happen to share that knowledge with the Almighty, permit me to say that it is Blackheath." *W. J. Lampton*

Walnuts and Wine

THE BOBBYMOBILE

AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY BOBBY

By Carlyle Smith

I 'm goin' to build me an Ortermobile
With big Rubber Balls set in place of each wheel,
So that when they strike thank-you-marms anywhere
They 'll bounce ninety-seven miles up in the air,
And when they come down on all fours like a cat
They 'll bounce up again ten miles further than that.

Instead of a horn that will honk like a loon,
Or give a deep groan like an old French bassoon,
I 'm goin' to rig up a hand-organ affair
That holds every latest most popular air,
Attached to the wheels so the faster we go
The louder 't will play its Te-Diddledy-O.

Up front on the chassis a saddle I 'll place,
So that when I enter some motor-car race
I 'll have a front seat and be able to see
Just what they are doin' who 're racing with me;
And perched like a Jockey right up at the fore
My orders to chauffeur and crew I will roar.

And then I 've a plan for a wonderful thing—
A sort of cow-catcher to grab on the wing
The dogs and the kittens, the hens and the folks,
Who get in the way of our onrushing spokes.
I don't know a car in the whole motor line
That has a Folks-Catcher attachment like mine.

And then if my car works I 'll ask for the trade
Of those who would like a fine auto thus made,
And make such a fortune that all in due course
I 'll have 'most enough for to buy me a horse,
And all of it made from my Rubber-Ball-Wheel-
Band-Standed-Folks-Catcher-New-Bobbymobile!



Molasses will catch more flies than vinegar, but who wants to be
a fly-trap?

Charles E. Lehman

Walnuts and Wine

A TELLING POINT

By Karl von Kraft

You can always tell the Boston Girl:
Her intellect is such
That she's above the common whirl—
But you can't tell her much.

THE LONGEST WORD

"What is the longest word in the English language?" asked Uncle Tom.

"Valetudinarianism, I suppose," replied James, who had taken a prize in spelling.

"No," spoke up Susie; "it's 'smiles,' because there is a whole mile between the first and last letters."

"I know one," said Jack, "that has over three miles between its first and last letters."

"What word is that?" asked Uncle Tom.

"Beleaguered," cried Jack triumphantly.

"I know one," said Philip, "that is longer than that. 'Trans-continental' has a whole continent between its beginning and ending."

"'Interoceanic' beats them all," exclaimed Elsie, "for it contains an ocean; and an ocean is larger than any continent."

O. M. Verdel

TOO SCANT

Jack had a new athletic suit of which he was very proud. It consisted of a pair of scant running drawers and a scant jersey. One day he came home with a much younger boy, and asked permission to try on his suit, so that his friend might admire it.

It was soon on, and Jack awaited the approval of the small boy. None came.

"Why don't you say it's nice?" he asked.

"Why," stammered the little fellow, not wishing to offend—"I—I know it *is* nice, but—why don't you put the rest of it on, Jack?"

Catharine Houghton Griebel

AS USUAL

Jokely: "I got a batch of aeroplane jokes ready and sent them out last week."

Boggs: "What luck did you have with them?"

Jokely: "Oh, they all came flying back." *Will S. Gidley*

Walnuts and Wine

SOMETHING TO SHOW

"Do you mean to tell me," demanded Mr. Sillicus angrily, "that you actually ordered ten dollars' worth of groceries of a total stranger, at prices less than any wholesale dealer can buy them, and paid for them in advance?"

"Yes, that's what I said," replied his better half.

"And you had n't sense enough to see that it was a bare-faced swindle!" roared Sillicus. "Well, your money's gone now, and you have nothing to show for it."

"Why, yes, I have, John," said his wife. "I have the man's receipt for the money."

E. J. Timmons

WHO'S LOONY NOW?

"This division of the women's ward," said the asylum guide, "was made necessary by the new style in skirts."

Looking in, the visitors saw a number of women in queer, bifurcated garments parading up and down the room.

"These patients," continued the attendant, "we call our pantalunatics."

Terrell Love Holliday

Women do not really like to deceive their husbands, but they are too tender-hearted to make them unhappy by telling them the truth.

W. T. Worden

A DUTY

"Look here, Ben, what did you shoot at me fer? I ain't got no quarrel with you."

"You had a feud with Jim Wombat, did n't ye?"

"I did, but Jim's dead."

"I'm his executor."

M.-L. H.

GAINING A BIT

At a Philadelphia club a discouraged musician was speaking to a friend concerning his latest work. He was extremely melancholy. "There's no denying it," he muttered, "I can't compose as well as I did five years ago."

"Oh, yes, you can," said the tried and honest friend to whom he made the confession. "It's only that your taste is improving."

Edwin Tarrisse



Improving upon Nature

At the first blush it seems a bold thing to suggest the possibility of improving upon nature, but when we come to consider the matter fairly, it is what is being done every day.

The gardener is improving on nature all the time, by giving her the scope of improved conditions. So a woman can improve her beauty by improving the conditions which control that beauty. By daily use of

Pears' Soap

the skin is softened and refined and brought to its true primitive condition affording nature, the greatest of all beautifiers, her full opportunities of imparting, with her own infallible touch, the grace and charm of a lovely complexion.

Under the pure emollient influence of Pears the skin assumes its natural delicate pink and white, whereby the whole expression of the face is endowed with an enhanced radiance.

Matchless for the Complexion

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEARS' OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST.

"All rights secured."

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

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HER SECRET

One day a pastor was calling upon a dear old lady, one of the "pillars" of the church to which they both belonged. As he thought of her long and useful life, and looked upon her sweet, placid countenance bearing but few tokens of her ninety-two years of earthly pilgrimage, he was moved to ask her, "My dear Mrs. S., what has been the chief source of your strength and sustenance during all these years? What has appealed to you as the real basis of your unusual vigor of mind and body, and has been to you an unfailing comfort through joy and sorrow? Tell me, that I may pass the secret on to others, and, if possible, profit by it myself."

The old lady thought a moment, then lifting her eyes, dim with age, yet kindling with sweet memories of the past, answered briefly, "Victuals."

Sarah L. Tenney

A COLOR POEM

By W. J. Lampton

Newspaper note: Helen pink is a new tint named in honor of Miss Helen Taft, daughter of the President.

Helen pink is a charming tint
Named for a charming maiden
Whose fair young face with Nature's pink
And white is sweetly laden.
No tint from all the rainbow hues
Is lovelier than this is
To touch with living, glowing light
The faces of our misses.
And gladly do we join with all
To sound its highest praises,
Because we know that Helen pink
Is not like Helen blazes.

DESIRABLE ASSIGNMENT

"Is your town doing anything in the uplift way?"

"Oh, yes! We have a committee appointed to see all shows suspected of being immoral and report on them."

"Good!"

"Yes, a committee of one thousand."

"Indeed! Is n't that a—er—rather large committee?"

"Well, you see, we could n't afford to create any hard feeling, and so we made it large enough to include about everybody."

P. R. Benson

Walnuts and Wine

It is now
customary at afternoon
teas and luncheons to serve

NABISCO

Sugar Wafers

as the crowning touch—with
tea or chocolate.

In ten cent tins

Also in twenty-five cent tins

**NATIONAL
BISCUIT COMPANY**



Walnuts and Wine

THE MORAL

"The persistency with which children see in a fable some other moral than the one which it is intended that they shall see is often distressing," remarks a Philadelphia instructor of the young. "I had recited to one little boy the story of the wolf and the lamb, and had followed it up with the remark:

"And now you see, Tommy, that the lamb would not have been eaten by the wolf if he had been good and sensible."

"Yes, I understand," said Tommy. "If the lamb had been good and sensible, we should have had him to eat!"

Taylor Edwards.

WHY, OF COURSE

He: "How clean the surf keeps the seashells."

She: "Yes; you know the sea is very tidy."

Charles C. Mullin

THE AUTHOR HIT BACK

It cost a certain publishing house so much to supply missing stamps for careless authors, that the policy was adopted of notifying erring ones of their shortcomings. One aspiring writer, therefore, received this printed notice recently:

No return postage was received with your manuscript. If you will send 4 cents in stamps to cover all postal charges, including the cost of this notice, your manuscript will be promptly returned to you.

He returned it, very promptly, with the stamps asked for, and the reply:

GENTLEMEN:

In reply to the paragraph marked with the line,
I send you four cents for these verses of mine.
I'm glad that at last I've discovered the worth
Of something that's troubled me greatly from birth.

Regretfully,

C. B. D.

A THOROUGH JOB

Little Alice was going on a journey, and Lily, her very colored nurse, was kneeling before her, polishing her little shoes.

"I want ter do 'em real good, Baby, so they 'll stay black while you are away."

Baby watched her seriously a moment, then remarked pleasantly:

"I tell you, Lily, God shoe-polished you real good before you went away, did n't He?"

J. T.

Walnuts and Wine

“Oh!
Look
Who’s
Here”



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Walnuts and Wine

THE EDITOR'S OFFICE-GIRL

By Eugene C. Dolson

The editor now is out of town,
On his long vacation whirl.
She's left in the office all alone,
The editor's office-girl.

And I often seem to catch the gleam
Of her sunny hair a-curl—
For hours and hours I sit and dream
Of the editor's office-girl;

Of her shapely hand and her shapely head—
Oh, she is the perfect pearl!—
But she sends my manuscript back unread,
The editor's office-girl.

A MIGHTY PROBLEM

A drummer stopped in a small country store, and, finding it impossible to sell anything, asked in serious wise if it was permissible in that town for a man to marry his widow's sister. The assembled natives thought it was mighty nice for the drummer to take such an interest in local matters, and at once began to argue the question. At the end of an hour it was decided in the affirmative, and a search was instituted for the drummer, in order that he might be enlightened—but he had moved on.

William Sanford

HAD REASON TO THINK SO

In the spring of '85 a reporter for the *Traveler*, Opie Read's paper, died. The day after the funeral a visitor to the office found the editor and his staff talking about their late associate.

"It has been a sad loss, friends," the visitor said, "a sad loss indeed." He sighed and looked about the room. "Ah, I am pleased to see," he went on, "that you commemorate the melancholy event by hanging up crape."

Opie Read frowned. "Crape?" he said. "Where do you see any crape?"

"Over there," said the visitor, pointing.

"Crape be durned!" said Read. "That is n't crape. It's the office towel."

Ray Trum Nathan



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A CHANCE

"Maybe we shall save them yet," said the first missionary, "if——" He broke off with a shudder as the cannibal chef put the kettle on and began whetting his knife.

"If what?" asked the second missionary sadly.

"If the road to a man's soul lies in the same direction as the road to his heart—through his stomach." *Terrell Love Holliday*

WHAT HE WAS PRACTISING

When a leading citizen of a New Hampshire town returned thither after a prolonged sojourn abroad, he made a tour of the place to find out how all his old friends were "getting along."

At one establishment he found a youth, the son of an old friend of his, whose father was still paying his office rent.

"Practising law now, Jim?" asked the returned one genially.

"No, sir," replied the youth frankly; "I appear to be, but I am really practising economy." *Penimore Martin*

HER TWO COMPLAINTS

Edward, the colored butler of a lady in Washington, had recommended his mother for the position of cook, but when the applicant came the lady noticed that she was not very strong-looking.

"Do you suppose you will be able to do the work, Auntie? You don't look very healthy."

"Yes, ma'am, I is able; I ain't nuvver been no ways sickly in my life—ain't nuvver had nuthin' but smallpox an' Edward." *N. L.*

CONSOLING

By Harold Susman

Wife Two said, "Husband always sings

The praise of One to me!"

Said Friend, "Well, maybe some fine day

He'll sing *your* praise to *Three*!"

A nut and a joke are alike in that they can both be cracked, and different in that the joke can be cracked again.

William J. Burtscher

And again.—*Editor.*

And again.—*Assistant Editor.*

And again—but why ring in the whole editorial staff?

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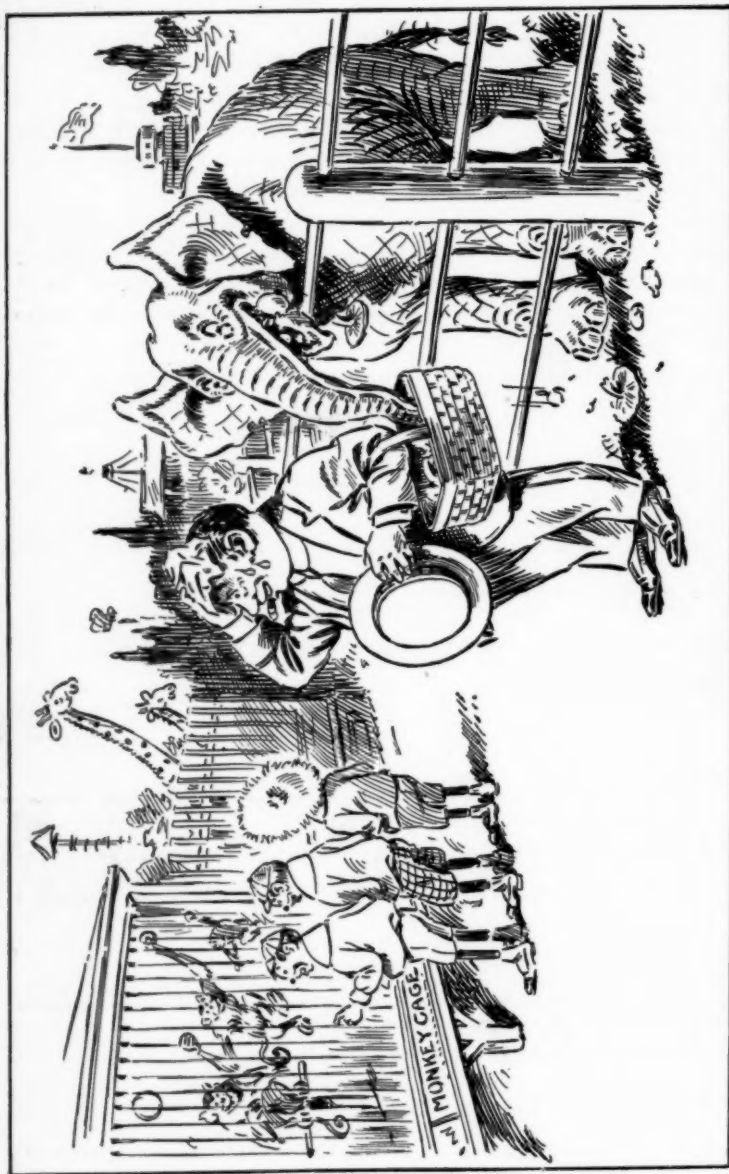
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JOHN.—“This gathering mushrooms is strenuous business, but I’ll compel Sue to acknowledge that I can tell the difference between them and a mackerel. Gosh I guess I’ll never get those kids away from that monkey cage. They seem to be more taken with them than with the elephant. I was always crazy about elephants when I was their age.”

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 OFFICER.—"Explain nothing! You come along with me. I'll fix your feet for poisoning a poor elephant with toadstools.
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JOHN.—"Gosh! I wish I'd listened to Sue."

THE BOYS.—"Boo-hoo-hoo! pop's up a'gainst it again!"

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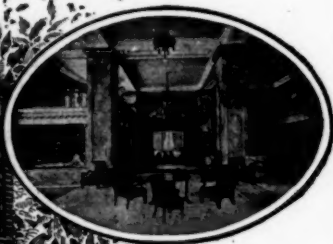
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